

which does not entirely subordinate the duties of the midwife to the control of the medical profession, making her responsible for calling in one of its members on the occurrence of the least irregularity in the labour or in the condition of the child. We have not much sympathy with the remark that it is impossible to define 'natural labour.' We live in a practical world, and it is not impossible to lay down rules of conduct intelligible to women of any training that will enable them to know when to send for medical assistance and enable those who supervise them to know when they have been culpable in not so sending. The political outlook affords little room for hoping that this question, which has no party interest but only a human one, will at any early time come within the sphere of practical politics, so that there need be no hasty judgment on the questions raised by the report."

This last remark will be a relief to the M.P's. who have sat upon the Select Committee, as there are doubtless medical men in their constituencies, who may have formed different views upon the Midwives' question.

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"A Trained Nurse" writes: "We Nurses are quite used to being legislated for as if we were children of three years old, deaf and dumb mutes, or even idiots. And Mr. W. RATHBONE's letter in the *Pall Mall Gazette* of the 24th inst., is a typical specimen of the very small knowledge which Hospital managers possess of the needs and wishes of their Nursing staff. How long will it take to convince these gentlemen that we have eyes, ears, tongues, and, thank God, pens of our own, and that having been endowed with these blessings, we mean to use them? Mr. RATHBONE says a distinct untruth when he says that the charges of mismanagement made by the spirited Special Commissioner of the *Pall Mall Gazette* were disproved at the Lords' inquiry. When was it disproved that Nurse Pairman was sent into an erysipelas ward twenty-four hours after an operation on her nose, with an unhealed wound, and that in ten days she was dead from erysipelatos inflammation of the brain? or that the Matron absolutely refused to permit a post-mortem. When was it disproved that the Sister of the erysipelas ward is also Sister of the isolation ward, and that Nurses are sent to nurse tracheotomy cases from erysipelas cases without disinfection? Has it been disproved that Probationers are sent out from the wards as 'thoroughly trained Nurses,' and their earnings grasped by the Hospital? If so, why does the annual report state that the profits from the private Nurses is more than £1,700? I say these charges and a dozen others have never been disproved—because they are true. The London Hospital Committee and the President of the College of Physicians have "emphatically denied" but they have not dared to accede to the public demand of the *Pall Mall Gazette* for an inquiry, and as long as they rule the London Hospital they will continue to emphatically deny the truth of any charge against them.

S. G.

## "The Truth about the London Hospital."

THE following able summing up, and reply, from the Special Commissioner of the *Pall Mall Gazette* appeared in the columns of our contemporary on August 29th:—

I will briefly answer the letters which have appeared in these columns in defence of the London Hospital, on August 15th and 16th. I beg to remind Lady Dorothy Nevill that her statement as to the "much abuse" of the London Hospital is not entirely accurate. So far as I know, there has been no abuse of the *Hospital* at all; there have been very stringent criticisms of the methods of its management, which is a totally different thing. Lady Dorothy Nevill says that she "invariably found everything unexceptionable for the comfort and cleanliness of her poor blind friends." I ask her whether it is not a fact, as I am informed, that the ophthalmic wards are quite isolated from all the other wards, and that her "poor blind friends" are left alone all through the night: that these who in their terrible affliction are one of the most helpless class of patients in the Hospital, have no night Nurse at all to attend to them. If this has not been the custom, I call upon the committee of the Hospital to contradict it at once. If it is a fact, I ask Lady Dorothy Nevill, in justice to herself, to admit that she knows very little of what goes on in the Hospital between her weekly visits, and I ask her, in justice to her "poor blind friends" to join with me in expostulating against this want of consideration for the comfort of the patients, and to use her influence to have a night Nurse appointed at once in the ophthalmic wards.

I thank Mr. Tallack, a defender of the Hospital for admitting that the Nurses are overworked. Most unprejudiced persons will agree with him in thinking that eighty-four hours' work every week is too great a strain on any woman's strength.

Lady George Hamilton has, perhaps, been sufficiently answered in your editorial remarks, and it is to be expected that, believing what she asserts, she will strongly support your belief that the appointment of an independent committee to investigate the truth of the statements against the present management of the Hospital would settle the question. This lady forms her opinion of the management after visiting the Hospital at stated periods; had she worked behind the scenes as I did, I am compelled to believe that it would have considerably modified her views on the matter.

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