

in 1890, to the fact that the Committee of the institution then (who are the Committee of the institution now) had permitted their authority to fall into the hands of their servants—which their own friends admit is the position of affairs at the present time.

Let me briefly recapitulate the charges which have been brought against the management of the London Hospital, and then consider the parody of those charges which was presented to a confiding body of Governors, by the chairman, at the recent quarterly court.

My first accusation was: That there was a great waste of good food in the wards. This, together with all my other charges, was "emphatically denied." Now the chairman admits that "No doubt there was waste, but no more than could be avoided. There was unavoidable waste in a large institution." Upon this point I differ with the chairman; but I content myself with the fact that this charge, first denied, is now admitted to be true. We have got a step further: it is now pleaded that the "waste is unavoidable." I maintain that this is a contradiction in terms, and that the waste at the London Hospital wards could easily be prevented. For example, I am told on good authority that at another great institution where the plan of distributing bread, now employed at the London Hospital, was formerly in force, a simple reform and more supervision in the distribution resulted in the saving of no less than six tons of bread per annum. And be it remembered that this is only one, and a small item, in the general provisioning of the wards.

2nd. That there are too few Nurses for the amount of work to be done, and therefore the patients cannot be properly attended to.

Mr. Buxton tried to meet this charge by stating that there are less than three patients to every Nurse—a most misleading defence, as I have previously pointed out, seeing that there are less than 230 Nurses for an average of 630 patients, and these comprise Nurses on day duty, Nurses on night duty, Nurses in the sick room, and Nurses away ill or on leave of absence. To take only one example; in George Ward, when I was there, there were only one Nurse and one Probationer to do the entire day-work for nineteen patients, and in Talbot Ward one Nurse and one Probationer had the care of twenty patients. If Mr. Buxton's figures are therefore even approximately correct—and I have reason to believe they are not—it is evident that there is a great want of method in the distribution of the Nursing Staff, because both George and Talbot Wards are amongst the heaviest in the Hospital.

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3rd. That the Nurses are treated with injustice, are overworked, and sweated out of their earnings. The only reply attempted to these several charges is contained in the statement by Mr. Buxton that: "The private Nurses receive from £28 to £40 per year." Mr. Buxton was hardly straightforward in omitting to state that the Probationers who are utilized as private Nurses are only paid on an average £16 per year. In any case, the private Nurses produce from a guinea and a half to two guineas per week, and the hospital, therefore, makes a profit upon their labour of from 150 to 300 per cent. in the case of the certificated Nurses, and of about 500 per cent. in cases of Probationers. If this is not sweating I should be very glad of an adequate term to express the transaction. Mr. Buxton also omitted to tell his audience that the Lords' Committee advised that the nurses should be paid more fairly by means of a sliding scale upon their earnings, and that this recommendation, like others which their lordships made, has been completely ignored by the Committee of the London Hospital.

4th. That the nurses were badly fed. Mr. Buxton attempts to meet this charge by a little cheap ridicule, and practically asserts that the kippers and the sardines only appear on the supper table by way of a tasty food for a change. If Mr. Buxton had been in my position, and had had to consume this "tasty" food or go to bed supperless, he would probably have considered that a substantial meal at the end of a heavy day's work would be more calculated to maintain the strength, and therefore the efficiency, of the Nursing Staff. The uninitiated would almost imagine, from Mr. Buxton's florid description of the commissariat, that every Nurse chose from a menu *à la carte* the special delicacy her soul delighted in.

5th. That it is unjust to the public to send out half-trained Probationers as thoroughly Trained Nurses. It is noticeable that Mr. Buxton carefully avoided any reference to this matter, and did not attempt to defend the indefensible practice of deceiving the public and obtaining money by false pretences.

6th. That the Matron does not visit the wards, which it is the first duty of her post to supervise. This charge is admitted to be true. In this most extraordinary Hospital another lady has been appointed and paid to do the Matron's work; and yet this hospital perpetually parades its poverty.

7th. That the lives of the patients are unnecessarily risked in the isolation and erysipelas wards. This charge is practically admitted to be true; its seriousness also is fully admitted. But a miserable quibble is attempted as to the possible conveyance of infection by "a Sister." "It is a Sister," said

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