

Mr. Hale, "not a Nurse, who goes from the one ward to the other." And Mr. Hale states that he does so himself. All I can say is that in that case the Chairman of the Committee is a source of danger to the patients as well as the Sister. The medical staff are accused by the Chairman of knowing and approving of this free communication between the fever and erysipelas wards. They would do well to defend themselves from the aspersion thus cast upon them.

The trump cards in the defence are two—first, that a large number of the Nurses have signed a letter declaring themselves to be wrongfully accused of neglect, cruelty to the patients, &c., and supporting the Matron. It is clear that the supposed signatories of this letter have not read my articles, and that the purport of my charges has been entirely misinterpreted to them. The only other comment I need make upon this is the obvious one that not one name appears upon the printed forms of the letter which the Committee have made public and distributed—a precaution, perhaps, adopted because it is proven beyond dispute that in 1890, when a similar testimonial, which also was said to have been "written without the knowledge of any of the officials," was handed in to the Select Committee of the House of Lords, it was found that in at least one instance forgery had been committed, and a Nurse's name appended to this document without her knowledge or consent; while a number of other Nurses signed it without reading it, and simply because they were told that they must do so as the document was wanted at headquarters. But I should like to know why twelve of the hospital Nurses refused to sign this last paper, and I shall be interested, if furnished their names, to watch their careers. Self-interest in most cases is paramount to more praiseworthy motives, and, in consequence of this common failing, it is not to be wondered at that Nurses defend the institution in which they received their training. Discredit was brought upon a certain large hospital a few years ago, and for several seasons Nurses who had been, or were, connected with that institution found it very hard to obtain employment, as the public seemed prejudiced against them in consequence of the scandal. In defending their training-school, Nurses are defending their training and their livelihood which depends to such an extent upon both.

Mr. Buxton also complains that the letters from correspondents, as well as my articles, were anonymous. As for myself I am in a dilemma, for the London Hospital Committee seem very difficult to please. If one does not sign one's

name one is accused of hiding under the cloak of anonymity; if one signs one's name she is accused of seeking notoriety. The second line of defence is one that I am astonished at any body of English gentlemen adopting. In effect the Committee of the London Hospital say, "We are accused by a public newspaper of mismanaging a public institution and wasting public funds. We are accused of allowing our authority to lapse into the hands of our servants, and consequently of being entirely unfit for the position which we occupy. We are challenged to permit our accusers to prove their charges, and we dare not allow them to do so. We proclaim our excellence from the house-tops; we denounce in unmeasured terms, as malicious and untruthful, the statements which are brought against us, and yet we dare not seize the opportunity of proving how perfect our system of management is, of proving the contemptible malice of which we complain, of dragging into the light of day the cliques, the enemies whom we assert are conspiring to ruin this great institution."

"LONDON HOSPITAL."

*To the* EDITOR *of the* PALL MALL GAZETTE.

SIR.—I have been greatly interested in reading the articles of your Special Commissioner, and the subsequent correspondence dealing with the nursing arrangements at the London Hospital. The letter signed by the treasurer, chairman, and one of the consulting physicians, dated July 29, leaves the matter quite unsettled, and the attempt to hide behind the House of Lords Committee is a sorry way out of their obligations and responsibilities.

The treasurer's letter goes on to protest against such "irresponsible utterances" as those of your Commissioner, and then invites "fair and unprejudiced persons to come to the Hospital by day or night, and see for themselves the work which is being done there." It is absolutely impossible to get any reliable information on such a subject in such a fragmentary and superficial manner, and it is just the fact that your Commissioner entered as a Probationer and lived the life of the Probationers, which has led me to read very carefully her papers, in which we get the earliest impressions of her surroundings. It is for this reason that the "irresponsible utterances" of a novice in hospital life, by teaching us to see ourselves as others see us, are deserving of attention, and ought, I think, to have roused the House Committee to inquire into the charges made, and to have looked round into the daily routine, whether there was room or call for change and improvement. Many of the arrange-

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