

## "The Truth about the London Hospital."

### ITS DEFENCE.

ON the 2nd inst., the following correspondence was published in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, together with a leading article which, in quiet but firm language, pointed out that this so-called reply was no answer at all, and, on behalf of that Journal, demanded a public inquiry into the charges which it has brought against the London Hospital Committee:—

To the EDITOR of the PALL MALL GAZETTE.

SIR,—The attention of the House Committee and of the staff of the London Hospital has been drawn to the series of articles recently appearing in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, and we are authorized to ask you to insert and give equal prominence to the following reply:—

Such charges as those made in your influential paper gain their weight from the claim which is clearly set out in the words of the writer: 'Having read the appeal . . . appearing in the *Hospital* of June 5th. . . I applied to the London Hospital . . . and deposited thirteen guineas for three months' training as a Nurse.'

We are afraid, Sir, that you and your readers have been most seriously misled in the very beginning by your special commissioner. Anxious, as we fully understand, to treat a matter which you consider of public importance, you have been induced to publish what appear to be the foregone conclusions of an imperfectly informed partisan, thus aggravating the very injustice against which the paragraph in the *Hospital* was evidently written.

No paying Probationer entered this Hospital during the month of June. One lady who is now working at the Hospital, came on May 16, but no other entered until July 3, and as the latter is also still with us, and the writer states that she has 'left the Hospital for ever,' the introduction must convey a false impression.

We emphatically deny the truth of these articles.

Most, if not all, of the charges now renewed were laid before the House of Lords' Committee inquiring into the work of the Metropolitan Hospitals, were fully examined by their lordships, and after a most exhaustive inquiry the finding of the Select Committee was:—

The London Hospital . . . is an admirable Hospital doing work in a part of London where it confers inestimable benefit upon a very large and a very poor population.

They therefore think it deserving of the greatest measure of charitable support.

We confidently assert that no abuse or wrong has ever been brought to the notice of the committee which they have not carefully considered, and which they have not striven to amend, with the happy result that the management of the London Hospital, whatever may be its oversights or mistakes, from which no Institution can be wholly exempt, compares favourably with that of any other Hospital in the world. Only by slow degrees and with constant vigilance can real improvements be carried out. It is in this way that the London Hospital, and especially the Nursing arrangements, under the direction of the present Matron, have been so much improved during the last twelve years.

**The "NURSING RECORD" has a Larger Sale than any other Journal devoted solely to Nursing Work.**

We strongly protest against the public attaching any weight to such irresponsible utterances as those of your commissioner, and we reiterate most strongly the appeal which appeared in the *Hospital* newspaper of June 5th—a paper which we may say has not the very remotest connection with the London Hospital. Let fair and unprejudiced persons come to the Hospital by day or night and see themselves the work which is being done there.

J. H. BUXTON, *Treasurer.*  
JOHN H. HALE, *Chairman.*  
ANDREW CLARK, M.D., *Senior Consulting Physician.*

London Hospital, Whitechapel, E., July 29.

(BY A FRIEND OF THE HOSPITAL.)

"We have received the following account of a visit to the Hospital and interview with the Secretary and House Governor from one who describes himself as having 'special cause for gratitude to the Hospital.'

I found the Secretary and House Governor of the Hospital—for Mr. Roberts combines both posts—sitting in his inner room, immersed in work connected with the house property of the Hospital. From the free and easy way in which the clerks and Nurses came in and out to converse with Mr. Roberts my first impression did not convey an idea of a reign of terror. And afterwards, in walking round the wards, I found Mr. Roberts greeted everywhere with the utmost affability and pleasure.

'WE COURT PUBLIC INQUIRY.'

Mr. Roberts did not conceal his annoyance at the attacks made upon his government. In fact, every dovecot in the Hospital has been fluttered by them, and I found them everywhere the common topic of conversation among rulers and ruled, from the Matron down to the newest Probationer.

'We depend on the public for support,' he said, 'and these attacks, however frivolous, have the worst possible effect on our income. Our old friends stick by us, and our best friends are those who have known us longest, but we lose on the small subscriptions. What we object to is the mode of the attack. We do not mind anyone coming here and openly investigating the whole place—we court public inquiry—but we say that an inquirer who comes here as a Probationer in order to spy out the land is not in a fair position to come to a right judgment. She will approach the whole business in the wrong spirit. Her work will be irksome to her. The obedience freely given by one who wishes to learn will be hateful to a mere spy. The sympathy necessary to good Nursing, and without which all Nursing is intolerable, will be absent from her. The aim she has in view will distort everything she does.'

THE TRAINING OF PROBATIONERS.

"Yes, but her authority will be great with the public. Granted that this Nurse shows herself unsympathetic—that she complains of the patients, and even the children, on whom she waited—that she shows a carping spirit of criticism—that her horror of discipline amounts to a spirit of rebellion'—(these were the points on which Mr. Roberts insisted)—"still she has been a Nurse, she has been 'through the mill' and the sentimental public, as ready to pity as they are to curse, will cry 'Shame!'"

"But a great many of her charges can be shown to be absolutely false. She says that Probationers are taught nothing, but 'sweated out' as Trained Nurses. Now look at that board of notices, containing the courses of lectures now being given to probationers." And he showed me a

**The "NURSING RECORD" has a Larger Sale than any other Journal devoted solely to Nursing Work.**

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)