

Sisters, it is obvious that promotion in a Hospital must depend on merit rather than seniority, in spite of the envies and jealousies roused.

CONCLUSION—GROSS EXAGGERATION.

What, then, is the final upshot of the charges brought against the Hospital? The Hospital shares with nearly all others the evil system of excessive work; and power is perhaps, thanks to the weakness of the committee, placed in too few hands. But that is about all. Nothing could equal the cleanliness and organization of the wards, and the system of sinks and lavatories is so perfect that it is difficult to imagine a Probationer so stupid as to confuse them; but with stupidity, organization itself fights in vain. The training and housing of the Probationers is admirable. The life is difficult; but a Nurse's life cannot be an easy one. The punctuality, despatch, and order with which all things are done—believe a patient—admit of no improvement. These are the qualities of strong government, and with it, doubtless you have the defects. Perhaps there is a defect of sympathy in the treatment of the Nurses; this might be cured by placing some competent, hardworking ladies on the committee.

FROM ANOTHER POINT OF VIEW.

To the Editor of the PALL MALL GAZETTE.

DEAR SIR,—Believing you desire to know and publish the truth about the London Hospital, I venture to ask you to look at the statements of your special commissioner from the standpoint of those who enter the Hospital, not as newspaper reporters, but as those who wish to become Nurses and friends of the sick poor.

I would rather this had been undertaken by some one abler than myself; but, though not yet a trained Nurse, I have been in Hospital long enough to considerably modify ideas formed in my first three months. I do not accuse your commissioner of telling direct falsehoods, or of any gross exaggerations; indeed, in the first column of your article of the 18th inst. her truthfulness appears. She tells us, "the system of management she does not understand."

What a pity, then, she should presume to criticize!

Her first complaint is a want of uniformity in the instruction of probationers. How can it be otherwise where an Institution is too large for all to be instructed by one? With many teachers must come varying ability and varying inclination to teach. I may say, after working in every ward but two in the Hospital, I have found Sisters and Nurses, if not equally approachable and apt to teach, almost without exception, uniformly, kind and willing; nor has any one found it necessary to warn me not to make complaints to friends who visit the Hospital.

Truly the 'necessity for funds is constantly before one's eyes;' in this lies one evidence of economy. But besides this admission we get the charge of waste of good food. This doubtless goes on more or less in all the wards, but your commissioner gives no suggestion of how it can be remedied. It seems to me, after nearly two years' experience, to be the result of individual extravagance rather than of mismanagement. The diets are carefully ordered every day, each patient is allowed barely what physiological teachers tell us is sufficient to sustain healthy life. Food is carefully weighed out to each ward in the kitchen, and the meat is weighed again in the wards. Sometimes, of course, the patients do not eat their full allowance, and a varying quantity of scraps remain. To what extent these and the bones could with

advantage be used up in the kitchen is open to question, but it is certain their distribution, while they are fresh, to deserving cases outside would require careful investigation and organized labour which would cost more than the fragments are worth. The present plan is to sell them for what they will fetch, and if careless Probationers will spoil the sample by putting tea-leaves in the piece-pail, no wonder if the price is low; the 'management' is not at fault, since another pail is provided for rubbish doomed to early destruction.

'Dealing unfairly with Probationers' comes next. The Probationer Sisters are the first to tell us they learn far more in that capacity than in their humbler uniform. Where are the 'capable Matrons' of the future to come from if they are not trained in the office as well as the wards of a large, well-organized Institution? And if they do take Sisters' holiday duty in the wards, as they do, 'over the heads of Staff Nurses who have been many years in the Hospital,' is it not better they should be over those who can do their work without supervision, and who are sufficiently trained to keep their own places and let the Sister keep hers—which is totally distinct? And as to our being sent to private cases, I and several others are still hoping to be sent to one before having to decide whether or no we shall ask to serve our third year on the private staff. We hope we may be considered capable of nursing well some cases even if we be not yet fully trained in all branches of our profession. It is a pity, to enforce her point, your commissioner could not find some evidence of carelessness on the part of one of our own Nurses.

The isolation wards, every one must admit, sadly need rebuilding, and no doubt the authorities will gladly undertake the work if the means are put at their disposal. I have worked in both male and female Blizzard wards and in isolation, and can conscientiously say every precaution possible under existing circumstances is taken to prevent the spread of infection. It would not be justifiable to leave a Nurse alone on day or night without the possibility of calling some one in case of emergency. The Sister does not stay in the ward longer than the Doctor, and comes in contact with the patient even less. Still, many improvements are needed here, as the work is carried on amid difficulties, discomforts, and possible risks, which will doubtless disappear when generous friends give us new isolation wards.—Yours truly,

July 26.

A HARD WORKED ONE.

And on August 3rd there appeared the following crushing reply to the foregoing defence:—

To the EDITOR of the PALL MALL GAZETTE.

"SIR,—In accordance with your instructions I will briefly answer the official defence advanced by the London Hospital. The public may be surprised at it. I am not. In the first place, Sir Andrew Clark and his co-signatories actually give as a quotation from my article words that I never used. In the next place, I object to the matter being made a personal one, and consider it much below the dignity of Sir Andrew Clark, M.D., President of the Royal College of Physicians—to say nothing of the other two signatories of the letter—that he should indulge in abuse of me. And I tell him that to call me an 'imperfectly informed partisan' is no answer at all to the very grave statements which I have made

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