

annual course of lectures to the Nurses was thus shown to have borne good fruit."

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"The committee took the opportunity of thanking the honorary medical staff for their devoted services. The receipt of £1,400 from the Hospital Sunday and Saturday Fund was gratefully acknowledged, and a glance at the statement of accounts would show how dependent the Hospital was on this source of income for its efficient working. The committee regretted that unavoidable circumstances had prevented them from fulfilling the anticipation they indicated in last year's report, with regard to a new Hospital. The negotiations had, during the year, developed into a most munificent offer of a new Hospital and Nurses' Home, complete in every respect, by the David Lewis Trust, accompanied, however, by certain conditions (one of which entailed the providing of a large sum by the Corporation and the general public for the purchase of a more suitable site), which the Hospital Committee were making strenuous efforts to carry out."

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THE following is the Report drawn up and presented to the Chelsea Vestry by the Medical Officer of Health, Dr. LOUIS C. PARKES, concerning the condition of the Chelsea Hospital for Women:—

"My Lords and Gentlemen,—My attention has recently been directed to the sanitary condition of this Hospital by the occurrence of four cases of scarlet fever amongst the Nursing staff, associated, as I am informed, with antecedent cases of sore throat. The mortality statistics of the Hospital for the past year (1893) have also appeared to me to be unsatisfactory, and to call for further explanation at the hands of the Hospital authorities. The most important facts in connection with these statistics, as furnished to me by the local Registrar of births and deaths, are as follows:—The Hospital has 60 beds, and 660 patients were treated in its wards (in-patients) in 1893. The total number of deaths in this year was 36, of which number 21, or 58 per cent., were deaths consequent upon surgical operation. There were six deaths from septicæmia, or blood poisoning, unconnected with operation, three of which were consequent upon miscarriage. Of the deaths consequent upon operation, two were stated to be due to septicæmia, ten to peritonitis, in six the actual cause of death is unstated, and in two it is ascribed to shock, six days and four days after the operation. All these operations were undertaken with the object of removing either ovarian tumours, diseased ovaries and their appendages, tumours of the womb, or for the relief of prolapse of the latter organ.

"The aim of the majority of these operations, except those for the removal of ovarian tumours, is to mitigate pain and discomfort, and not primarily to save life; the diseased conditions, for the relief of which such operative treatment is applied, being for the most part chronic in their nature, and by no means tending to an early fatal termination. It is evident, therefore, that the question of the justifiability of such operations must arise, unless it is possible to reduce the risk of fatal issue from such operations to an extremely low figure. I have applied to the Hospital authorities for authenticated details, explanatory of those mortality statistics, but have not, so far, been favoured with any reply. I am very strongly of opinion that, in the interest of the public generally, an authoritative official statement should be forthcoming, setting forth the number of each distinct class of operation, the percentage mortality of each class, the actual cause of death in every case subsequent to operation, and the amount of permanent relief afforded in the cases not terminating fatally.

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"On the 19th January, I made a careful inspection of the Hospital, and the drains were tested on the following day. The result of this examination showed that the drains tested leaked very seriously, that there was no cement in the underparts of the joints exposed, that there was no proper ventilation to the drains, that the water-closets were of a kind most unsuitable for hospital work, that the arrangements in the operating theatre permitted foul air to regurgitate from a sink and lavatory waste-pipe, and that the position of the hot-water pipes sunk spaces in the floors, covered by open grating, was most undesirable in the wards and operating theatre. Being strongly convinced that a Hospital of this character should be rendered as sanitariously perfect as such an institution can be, so that the operations performed in it, and the treatment of the patients generally may be carried on under those conditions which are now believed to be indispensable, if successful results are to be obtained, it becomes my duty to recommend that notices should be served under the Public Health (London) Act on the governing committee of the Hospital, requiring them so to amend the sanitary arrangements as to place the Hospital in a thorough sanitary condition, within a space of two months, and prohibiting the use of the Hospital for the reception of in-patients until such work has been performed to your satisfaction.

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"Attached to the report was a list of the cases treated unsuccessfully at the Hospital. From this it appeared that during the year, 1893, 21 comparatively young women had died after operations, while six more had succumbed to septicæmia, unconnected with operations."

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