

By-the-by, in referring to the *Nurses' Journal*, we must not omit to thank "Sister Ellen" (why hide her magnanimous personality behind a *nom de plume*?) for her gracious permission to those members who differ from her in opinion, "to hand in their resignation." They will probably, and in the same spirit of generosity, accord the same liberty of action to their anonymous and probably, therefore, insignificant critic.

To be able to take up the cudgels in defence of the authorities of the London Hospital, is a novel and agreeable experience, but the criticism upon the part of a medical man in the *Medical Times* and *Lancet* concerning the new and admirable departure at the London of Preliminary Training for Nurses compels us to do so, as we have been noting with great satisfaction the progressive policy and many improvements which the committee of this institution have introduced into their Nursing department ever since they were somewhat roughly awakened to the sense of their shortcomings by the *exposé* before the Select Committee of the House of Lords in 1890.

The London Hospital at present occupies the proud position of being the only Hospital in England where the system, advocated for some time in this journal, of preliminary education for Nurses is in force—Probationers being admitted to Tredegar House for practical instruction for a term of six weeks before being admitted to the wards. This is admirable as a beginning, and we have no doubt that the term will in the future be extended, so as to make the preliminary training thoroughly efficient.

Dr. Brassey Brierley, the medical man in question, has evidently been somewhat unfortunate in his experience of the trained Nurse, or as he prefers to name her "the hireling," and he strongly objects to the privileges to which the system of modern training entitles her. He says: "Compare the relative position of the medical student and the Nurse. (1) The Probationer receives a salary at once; the medical student pays a handsome fee for Hospital practice. (2) The Nurse Probationer is taught bandaging, dressing, and, indeed, most minor surgery; the medical student may pick up these as best he can outside the theoretical lecture hall. (3) One dresser is

allowed to assist the house surgeon during an operation; four or five women wait upon the operator."

All this is quite true, but Dr. Brassey Brierley must remember that the Probationer, as a rule, gives twelve to fourteen hours a day—very arduous labour—in the service of the Hospital in return for her training; whereas the student spends a few hours only in the Hospital entirely for his own professional benefit. We have little doubt that, as the education of the Nurse becomes more organised and efficient, she also will be called upon to pay in hard cash for the advantages she receives.

Finally, Dr. Brassey Brierley concludes: "I desire to say in my opinion the services of Hospital trained Nurses, so long as they are attached to a Hospital, should be hired out to the public at a cost simply sufficient to cover their salary and all incidental expenses, such as travelling, laundry work, &c."

What does this suggestion mean? Either that the inefficient Probationer must be "hired out" during her training at a nominal fee—or when trained, for 12s. 6d. a week, the usual salary of a Nurse whilst in the service of a Hospital—and what would be the result of this suggestion? Simply that private Nursing at a living wage would be made impossible for trained Nurses, with the result of wholesale pauperisation of the trained Nurse.

We have given much time and thought during the past two years to the subject of Private Nurses' fees, and we are of opinion that the labourer is worthy of his hire, and that a really efficient Nurse is well worth to the public from two to three guineas a week. Our only regret in this connection is that the supply of really efficient Nurses is so terribly limited.

At a meeting of the Brecon Board of Guardians it was reported that a Nurse had been engaged from an Institution at Cardiff to nurse a case of small-pox in a lodging-house in the town. In two days she left without the consent or approval of the doctor. The Clerk to the Guardians had received from the Institution a bill of charges in connection with the Nurse's services, amounting to a considerable sum. The medical officer stated that the Nurse was not informed in the telegram that the infectious case was in a common lodging-house. It was agreed that the Institution be refunded the Nurse's travelling expenses.

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