

Hospital Reform.

DR. C. S. JEAFFRESON, of Newcastle, has written an excellent pamphlet entitled "The Infirmary Scheme, and the Abuse of Medical Charities." For several months Newcastle has thought of and discussed nothing but the proposed new Infirmary. According to Dr. Jeaffreson, "newspapers vie with each other in praising it, any attempt at criticism is tabooed, and we are daily nauseated by columns of twaddle on the subject, &c." Our editorial table has certainly been piled high with appeals and circulars anent this Infirmary which would suffice to advertise many Hospitals. And Dr. Jeaffreson affirms that there is very grave abuse of medical charity existing in Newcastle, and he looks forward eagerly for some investigations by the newly-arisen Hospital Reform Association. The chief reforms Dr. Jeaffreson advocates are:

(1) The separation of the charitable from the co-operative system of medical relief.

(2) The abolition of the out-patient department, excepting as regards those persons who have been previously in the Hospital.

(3) The abolition of those special departments which are already represented by old Institutions in the town, and the existence of which causes much overlapping and loss of money.

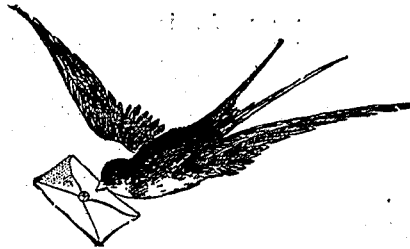
(4) The exercise of careful surveillance and check upon those who gain admission into the Institution. This could easily be done by publishing weekly the names and addresses and occupations of the patients.

The suggestion of a weekly published list is not a happy one, for there are many of the working classes who are temporarily crippled in funds and seek Hospital assistance in times of need; and it would not be just to stigmatise these as habitual recipients of charity.

Some years since Dr. Jeaffreson suggested:—

"That in all large towns there should be a medical charity agency, and that, except in the case of accident and urgent disease, no patients should be admitted to any of the medical charities excepting through this agency. If anyone wished to become a patient of any of our medical charities, they would apply to the agency, where their circumstances would be investigated; and if their circumstances were found to justify it, a letter for the Institution they wished to attend would be given to them. The agency would be kept up at the expense of the charities, each paying an amount *pro rata* upon annual income. In connection with the agency would be a staff of inspectors who would investigate in every case, or in such cases as seemed desirable; in this way much abuse of charity would become an impossibility, and the amount of money saved to the various Institutions would more than recompense them for their share of the expenses of the agency. The agency would in no way interfere with, or control, the workings of the various charities, they would enjoy the same autonomy they have at the present moment."

Some plan must shortly be formulated to prevent the abuse of medical charities, and to protect the medical man from the wholesale loss of his legitimate fees.



Our Australian Letter.

FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.

THE excitement consequent on the recent agitation for eight hours' work for Nurses has considerably abated, and the matter is to be in abeyance until January. In the meantime, Mr. Turner is testing the truthfulness of the statements of the various Hospital officials as to the hours their Nurses are on duty. This is done by each Nurse having a time book, in which she registers her going on and off duty, and the same is given in to the office to be entered in a weekly chart. At the end of three months these are to be sent to Mr. Turner.

The whole thing has had a most disturbing and, in some instances, a demoralising effect, especially on the weak and pleasure-loving members of the profession, and also on some of those who have been compelled, by circumstances, to work for themselves. Inveterate grumblers. Idlers at heart, who despise work, even though it is to give them their bread, they are never satisfied, although year after year their managers have lightened the so-called menial parts of their work, until now once a week these young ladies find scrubbing locker-tops with miniature scrubbing brushes simply killing. Once they had the long wards to scrub three times a year with turpentine, till all the wax was cleaned off ready for repolishing. They also cleaned the grates and waxed and polished the floors; all that has been done away with in all the Hospitals; their food is good enough for their Matrons, yet the same is not good enough for them.

As you most aptly said in your article on Nurses' hours in Melbourne, they want "Nursing made easy."

So much for the grumblers. But our Nurses are not all in that category, as you will see from Sister Ward's letter. Some of the good old spirit of the Nurse of former times (not the *New Nurse*) still exists, even in far away Australia, which reflects credit on the Colonial Nursing world, showing that unselfishness can exist, even while working for the necessities of life, and that we have Nurses at heart in Melbourne whose brains are not of such flimsy stuff as to be carried away by the attraction of eight hours work and excessive hours of idleness for recreation.

On October 3rd a garden *fête* was given by Lady Sargood for the benefit of the Convalescent Home for Women at Clayton Road, by which £300 was realised. It was largely attended, and the beautiful grounds of Ripon Lea were kindly thrown open to the public. Lady Sargood is on the committee for the Home, and spares herself no trouble in working for its interest. The present *fête* was given to obtain funds for painting and doing it up thoroughly before the summer sets in.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)