

evident that more than the ordinary supply of nurses was requisite. For a body of managers to decline to increase the supply of nurses even temporarily in such an emergency, and although the expense was not to be borne by themselves, is, I think, a serious matter. The managers say, in their statement, that there are rules applicable to the institution, which it is the duty of the superintendent and other officials to administer uniformly. But that is just one of the complaints I made to the board, that the superintendent did not administer uniformly. While the superintendent refused to bring in a nurse from the outside for cases in my ward, a nurse from a nursing home was introduced into a ward in another part of the infirmary. The managers seem to imply, by their refusal to answer the question I put at the board, that they entrust an official of the administrative department to say when a special nurse is or is not required; and that seems to me a grave position. In the first place, if the administrative official is to be charged with this duty, he would require to be specially trained for the purpose; but, even if he were, it would be impossible for him to decide in many cases. I could not myself go into my neighbour's ward and decide such a question in a case of which I knew nothing and as to an operation which I had not seen. Nor is such a rule followed in any well-conducted hospital.

"SPECIAL NURSES IN OTHER INSTITUTIONS.

"It has been said that the Western Infirmary compares advantageously with Edinburgh Royal Infirmary in respect of nursing. I made inquiries as to the supply of special nurses in that institution, and here is the answer:—'Special nurses for serious cases are supplied for a ward on the application of the resident physician or surgeon, and they remain as long as that officer considers their services necessary. Neither the superintendent nor the lady superintendent of nurses has any authority in the matter, and no nurse is ever withdrawn by either without a substitute being provided. No limit is put upon the number of special nurses supplied to a ward, it being of course, understood that no officer will apply for these unless when absolutely necessary.' From the Glasgow Royal Infirmary I had an answer to a similar question. The matron writes:—'In answer to your question in regard to the special nursing—First, the doctors are not limited in the number of special nurses asked for; second, I do not use my judgment as to whether a special nurse is necessary or not; third, the special nurse is not removed until instruction is received from the doctor that her services are no longer required.' This is exactly as it should be."

Reading between the lines it is easy to see that the usual "official autocracy," the curse of many societies and institutions, has once again instigated a *non possumus* policy upon the part of the directors of the Western Infirmary. Professor MacEwen is a man of unusual ability, and all his splendid work is performed upon a scientific basis; he has long ago recognized, and more than once generously acknowledged, the fact that the result of surgical science, which includes the comfort and recovery of the patient, cannot hope to attain its highest perfection unless the nursing of the patient is intelligent and efficient, and that the training of nurses to be efficient must have its practice based on a scientific

or clearly defined theoretical curriculum. Again no thoroughly efficient nursing is to be extracted for any length of time from women physically exhausted by overwork and long hours. It has long ago been demonstrated that successful results to the most brilliant surgery are impossible without the aid of scientific nursing, hence the insistence of our leading and most successful surgeons upon the nursing of their patients being thorough; and again it is these well qualified, conscientious nurses whose services are of the utmost value to the operator and the patient, who are demanding that their skill and usefulness should receive due recognition at the hands of Parliament, a protection long ago demanded and obtained by the medical practitioner. It is from men of the intellectual standard of Professor MacEwen, who appreciate nursing at its true value, that help should be forthcoming in the future, to obtain for nurses that legal status, and consequent protection, which is their due.

The following table is of some interest, as it shows the relative number of nurses, to beds, in the largest English and Scotch hospitals:—

Hospital.	Beds.	Inclusive Nursing Staff.
St. Bartholomew's	678	242
The London	776	229
Royal Infirmary, Edinburgh ...	780	185
Royal Infirmary, Glasgow ...	580	132
Western Infirmary, Glasgow ...	400	99

It will be seen that the nursing staffs at St. Bartholomew's and the London Hospitals in London far exceed the number of nurses per bed at the large Scotch hospitals, so that it would seem that an increased staff of nurses might be advisable in Scotch hospitals generally.

Another Protest.

At a Meeting of the Members' Rights Defence Committee of the Royal British Nurses' Association, held on November 10th, 1897, at 46, York Street, Portman Square, attention was drawn to a letter which appeared in the *Hospital* newspaper of November 6th, from "Nurse Louisa East," and which contained the following paragraph:—"I beg the members (of the Royal British Nurses' Association) to consider well whom they wish to be their president, H.R.H. Princess Christian, or Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, for it most certainly is the aim of the Members' Rights Defence Association to have in the end Mrs. Bedford Fenwick our president if they can." The following Resolution was then unanimously passed:—"The statement made by 'Nurse Louisa East'—who is apparently not a trained nurse—with reference to the Committee is absolutely devoid of truth, and can only have been made in order to deceive and mislead the Members of the Nurses' Association, as to the serious condition of their affairs. This Committee, therefore, calls upon 'Nurse' Louisa East to produce proofs of her unwarrantable assertion, or to publicly withdraw and apologise for it. The Members' Rights Defence Committee also place on record their strong disapproval of the cowardly and disloyal manner in which the officials and their friends attempt to place the blame for their mismanagement of the Association upon H.R.H. the President of the Association, to whom the Members of the Association have felt, and frequently expressed, the greatest gratitude for her efforts on their behalf."

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