

It is by such loyal and conscientious service, that the relations between medical men and nurses have hitherto been so harmonious; and it is because the most harmful results would follow to both professions, as well as to the public, if there were any disturbance in those relations, that the whole nursing world must deeply deplore the scandals which have been so painfully frequent, in recent times, in connection with the Nursing Department of the Chelsea Infirmery. The *West London Press*, for example, last week reported the following facts, under the heading of

"A PAINFUL INFIRMERY STORY—MATRON AND DOCTOR AT VARIANCE."

"The general committee having considered the case of a man named Morgan, recommended that no action be taken. Mr. Jeffery proposed as an amendment that the matter go to the Local Government Board for inquiry. He said that extraordinary attempts had been made to stifle discussion on the matter, and the Chairman had gone so far as to threaten him (Mr. Jeffery) in Committee that, if he took further steps in this matter, he would excite strong opposition on his appearance as a Parliamentary candidate."

In the first place, it appears to us to be eminently deserving of public attention, if efforts are made to stifle any scandal occurring in a public institution. And in this particular case, if any member were really "threatened" because he attempted to perform a public duty in obtaining inquiry into such a matter, the facts will be regarded by the public as requiring the most careful examination. The statements made by Mr. Jeffery, as reported by our contemporary, were briefly as follows:—A man named Morgan, a stone mason, forty-four years of age, was admitted to the Chelsea Infirmery for Hernia. For this, a member of the medical staff performed an operation, the precise nature of which was not stated, but the effect of which was to cause a wound of considerable length on the abdomen. The operator gave instructions that the man must be kept upon his back, and not be moved, the urgent necessity of which every trained nurse will, of course, understand. According to Mr. Jeffery, "the man went on well until the Matron came upon the scene. She promptly ordered that the patient be moved, and that a pillow be placed beneath his back." We should have imagined that such a proceeding—contrary as it is to

invariable practice in such cases—could not possibly have been permitted by a trained nurse, much less directed to be carried out—in defiance of medical instructions—by any person holding the position of Matron. The greatest astonishment will, therefore, be felt that the statement which we have quoted does not appear to be denied. According to the speaker, a result followed the moving of the patient which any experienced person might easily have anticipated. "The wound was re-opened, and the most serious hæmorrhage resulted." On discovering this, the operator "wrote to Dr. Moore, the Medical Superintendent, and intimated that he would not now be responsible for the man's life." The Matron, it appears, does not deny the facts, and even, according to Mr. Jeffery, "she made an understanding impossible, by retorting that the doctor had neglected to use bandages on the wound, and that he was therefore responsible"!

CRITICISING THE OPERATOR.

To all professional people, this latter statement would appear to be almost incredible. It would be serious enough if the Matron did actually disregard the medical directions, and in consequence placed the patient's life in peril. But that she should attempt to justify her acts by questioning the manner in which the patient had been operated upon—and should display such colossal ignorance of the methods now-a-days adopted by many operators, in attempting to blame the operator for the consequences of her interference—can, as we have said, scarcely be credited.

QUI S'EXCUSE S'ACCUSE.

As a matter of fact, a first year's Probationer would know that if no artificial support had been given to an abdominal wound, in the way of bandages, the very absence of such support must make it the more essential that the patient should not be moved. It is, therefore, almost inconceivable that any Matron should publicly exhibit such sublime contempt of the reasoning powers of her employers as to advance such a self-destructive excuse.

A PUBLIC INQUIRY DEMANDED.

It was, furthermore, stated that in this case a second operation was at once necessitated, and the man, being strong, recovered from it. But that does not conclude the matter. If the facts are at all accurate, they illustrate a serious moral. Unnecessary danger and suffering

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