

finds the Matron of St. John's "easily accessible and very charming." This lady remarks:—

"You would like to see the hospital. We are very proud of it, and of *our* staff. I am very busy getting through this pile of MSS. for the London Congress, but I will show you one of our wards."

"Kathleen" finds the wards in perfect order, and then they return to the sanctum, and here follows the discussion between the Matron and "Kathleen" on the present nursing "system," which is the *raison d'être* of the article. The Matron is represented as an uncompromising autocrat, opposed to even reasonable reforms for the comfort and well being of the nurses, instead of the typical, much esteemed, respected woman who, following in the footsteps of Florence Nightingale, has *inspired* every nursing reform effected in the past quarter-of-a-century, and who, in many instances, has sacrificed her health in carrying out the arduous work in connection with her office.

"Kathleen" is the mouth-piece of the "recalcitrant Pro," who, in our experience, is proverbial for her capacity in hospital life to detect the beam in her neighbour's eye, while peculiarly oblivious to the deficiencies of her own optic nerves.

For the improvement of the "system" of nursing, "Kathleen" delivers the following phillipic, which so horrifies the Matron "that when she read her famous paper at the recent Congress of Women, she had not recovered from the shock, as there was a tremor in her voice hitherto unknown!"

And no wonder! We somehow seem to have listened to this ingenious "Kathleen" before. It is not possible that she was under the table during those now historic Executive Meetings of the Royal British Nurses' Association, when "smashing up the Matrons" was the vogue, when "Pooh, pooh to you" was the inevitable reply to those who ventured to suggest that the Nurses' Association founded by nurses for nurses, might be used for their benefit, and not for the social advancement of individual medical men?

But to return to "Kathleen"—

"Yes," she said, addressing the horrified Matron on the nursing "system," which does not exist, "I could improve it by abolishing it. By diminishing your excessive authority as regards the appointment and dismissal of probationers, I would make you take more interest in your real hospital work, go round your wards, study your probationers' characters, and make you *less ornamental* and more useful (why not combine

the two?), I would have a Nursing Committee with real power, and on this a few medical men as well as women. You would be adviser, just as the medical man is adviser. This Committee would receive all applications for probationers, fill all appointments in conjunction with you, settle all complaints, dismiss and reward. You would always be consulted, and your advice asked for, but your great personal power would be for ever abolished. Now you are an autocrat, more despotic even than a Czar. Your system is out of harmony with the times. The probationer of to-day wants different treatment from the Pro. of the early days (and hasn't she got it?). She wants better food, better accommodation; but your system never took that into account, and all the improvements have been brought in by outsiders (steady, Kathleen), but as my time is up I must defer to another occasion my more advanced views on this great nursing question."

Exit "Kathleen," after confessing that she has conjured the whole interview from her inner consciousness!!

And now what has the Editor of a medical paper to say to this "diatribe," finding space in its pages? To us it appears very instructive corroboration of our contention that "the balance of power in hospital administration" must be most carefully maintained by the lay committees in institutions for the care of the sick, if the Matrons are to maintain reasonable discipline in the nursing department of hospitals, and, in consequence, efficient nursing; and if well trained nurses are to be possible. And, moreover, we find in the tone of "Kathleen" a note of warning to nurses to protect, at all costs, their personal rights in matters touching the discipline and organization of their profession.

E. G. F.

Dispensing for Women.

The London College of Pharmacy, Chemistry, etc., 5, Westbourne Park Road, Porchester Square, W., affords to ladies the opportunity of preparing for the examinations of the Pharmaceutical Society, and also the Assistants' Examination of the Apothecaries' Hall. There are two fully-equipped Laboratories and Class Rooms, and students have unlimited practice in Practical Chemistry and Dispensing. A qualified lady dispenser acts as Assistant. Apartments and Board for Resident Students are provided at 25s. per week. Information with regard to examinations and training may be obtained from the Secretary, at the address given above.

We are so frequently asked for information upon this subject, and there are so many nurses anxious and willing to acquire the important and useful knowledge of dispensing, that it affords us much pleasure to call attention to this College of Pharmacy.

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