

have proved. To the credit of medical men, it must be recorded that they offered themselves as "subjects," a convincing proof of their belief in the value of the experiment performed.

On the other hand the Hon. Stephen Coleridge demonstrates, with convincing clearness, not only that there are many licensed vivisectionists attached to the staffs of our hospitals, but also, a more serious but undeniable fact, that in sundry of the Metropolitan Hospitals, funds subscribed by the charitable public for the relief of the poor are—without the consent of the subscribers being asked or obtained—diverted to the support of medical schools where vivisection is practised. The most flagrant instance is the case of the Middlesex Hospital, where in the years 1897, 1898, 1899—in which the Prince of Wales' Hospital Fund contributed £1,000 annually to the funds—the Medical School absorbed from these same funds £611 7s. 9d., £800, and £800, respectively. The school, so assisted, publishes no accounts, but in the Report for 1899, the £800 paid to it by the Hospital is described as "contributions towards Lecturer's emoluments." The plain fact is that the standard of the medical education given by this school does not attract sufficient medical students to make it self supporting, and consequently it has to be bolstered up by the diversion of funds subscribed for the maintenance of the hospital.

It is unquestionable that scientific research, prosecuted on an equitable basis, is beneficial both to the sick poor, and indirectly to the sick rich. We are always on the side of progress, and are aware that each new step forward must be experimental in its nature. But the limits of justifiable research are, in our opinion, exceeded (1) when the interests of the patients are made subservient to those of the experimenter (2) when the prosecution of such research involves the torture of animals, and (3) when funds are diverted from their legitimate purpose for its support. The point to be insisted upon is that a right proportion should be observed, and we fear that in the present day, in the eagerness evinced in the pursuit of science, the old humane, kindly, regard for the patient as an individual is in danger of evaporating. The best guarantee that the interests of the sick are guarded would, in our opinion, be to grant to women the position which is their just due on the Boards of Management of our hospitals, and so to give due weight to the mother influence in the control of these institutions.

Annotations.

THE SALE OF CERTIFICATES.

Some little time since, Mr. Sydney Holland, Chairman of the London Hospital, offered to give expert information as regards nurse-training in the columns of the *Queen* to would-be nurses. It was this offer which prompted a more recent letter which appeared over the signature of "Justice" in this publication. The letter was as follows:—

"I have read with much interest in your issue of Nov. 17 the letter of the Hon. Sydney Holland, chairman of the London Hospital, headed, 'To Would-be Nurses,' and especially that part of it in which he advises 'That the agreement with the hospital which every probationer has to sign should be carefully studied.' But in the case of the London Hospital no amount of study of the rules, unless they have been altered since October, 1899, will show a 'would-be nurse' under what circumstances the special permission from the matron can or cannot be obtained for leaving the hospital. Nor do the rules show that a large sum of money, viz., £104, will be demanded from a probationer for leaving just before the completion of her first two years in the hospital if she wants her certificate.

"This information should, in justice to 'would-be-nurses,' probationers, and their relatives be stated in the rules, and further, notice should be sent by the secretary or some other official of the hospital, of a probationer's application to leave, and of the amounts demanded from her, to the parents or guardian of the probationer, if she has one, and the answer of the parents or guardian be waited for before assuming that the money will not be paid, and before withdrawing the claim for the money and dismissing the probationer for alleged misconduct, and without a certificate.

"JUSTICE."

This is, of course, an ex-parte statement, and the other point of view was given in a subsequent issue by the Hon. Sydney Holland.

"I am sorry to have to reply to the letter signed 'Justice' in your issue of the 15th; first, because I dislike replying to people who think it right to attack a hospital and are afraid to sign their name; and, secondly, because the letter refers to a personal grievance, and a public paper is not the place to discuss this. However, as 'Justice's' letter has been admitted, I hope I may claim a right of reply.

"'Justice,' whose desire to remain anonymous I appreciate and will respect, is a lady by birth and better off than most nurses. She came to the London Hospital and signed an agreement to stay three years. After about eighteen months she expressed a desire to break her agreement 'to go home and nurse a brother.' We made careful inquiry and decided that there was no such imperative necessity as would justify our agreeing to this. She had another sister at home, and her family were well in the position to engage a nurse. After a further short period she discovered that she was engaged to be married, and that

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)