

that very reason the ideal hospital would be a dull place to live in, worked entirely by angels. In a real hospital, worked by ordinary, healthy minded, human beings, if they are of the right sort, the same object is attained, with a certain amount of inevitable strife and friction. I have carefully analysed a good many hospital ructions and small differences that I have met with in my time, and I have found that they generally arise from the misfortune of two conscientious people, differing in opinion as to methods—not objects. Of course, sometimes you will meet small minded people, who are stirred by petty ambitions or petty personal likes and dislikes, but they are not very common. And so much for generalities.

Coming to detail, the successful working of all county hospitals depends largely on good management, good financial management, good medical management, good nursing and domestic management. Leaving out the Committee, the ultimate framer of rules, and the Secretary, with his endless financial worries, I will end up with a few words about the, to some people apparently, vexed question of internal management.

The Medical Staff have undoubted and entire charge of the treatment of the patients in the hospital, and a good deal of their work, and, therefore, their authority over the patients is delegated to their resident deputy, the house surgeon, who is empowered to act for them in their absence, and this fact should not, in county hospitals, be lost sight of. At the same time, the staff are always behind the house surgeon, and it is essential, if a healthy tone and good discipline is to be maintained in hospital wards, that this should be so. It is a mistake for a hospital to gradually drift into one man's hands, however good. But the house surgeon, who is appointed and paid by the Committee, also acts for them in medical matters; therefore the house surgeon in a county hospital is always an important executive officer, acting in medical matters, both for the staff and the committee in their absence, and having considerable jurisdiction over the patients. But, at the same time, he does not possess administrative domestic authority. His authority over the Nursing Staff is limited to seeing that his orders, and those of the staff, with regard to the patients, are carried out, and there he is absolute. But the arrangements for the nursing, for the nurses, and the domestic staff rest with a properly qualified and trained Matron, and should always do so; if she is incompetent or neglectful, the Committee should discharge her; but whilst she is Matron she should be responsible to the Medical Staff and Committee for the nursing arrangements, as well as to the committee for the domestic arrangements.

It is essential in a well organised hospital that

the orders and wishes of the physicians and surgeons should be promptly and skilfully obeyed. There should never be any need for them to go outside their scientific work; they should not be called upon to worry over general and domestic details. In an ideal hospital there will never be any hitch, nothing will ever go wrong. Committees will always have plenty of money; Surgeons and Physicians will never make mistakes; the Matron will possess the administrative ability of a Kitchener, with the personal magnetism of a Roberts, and the House Surgeon will possess all those excellent qualities which speeches at the openings of medical schools demand from him; Sisters will all be loyal, conscientious workers, earnest in instructing their probationers; all probationers will be animated by keen zeal, and a strong sense of duty, the domestic arrangements will all run smoothly, and the Millenium will not be far off. My hospital is not yet quite an ideal one; I hope somebody else's is.

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### Part of the Game.

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Mr. Sydney Holland's attack on the Matrons' Council in the *Times* has been opportune, as it gave the Hon. Secretary, Miss Margaret Brey a splendid opportunity, of which she availed herself admirably, to bring before the public a few facts which should prove of interest to them, about the Council's work and the forthcoming Nurses' Congress at Buffalo. As the whole question will come officially before the quarterly meeting of the Matrons' Council on Friday, after we have gone to press, we postpone further criticism on the correspondence.

Sir Henry Burdett, in his pseudo-nursing paper, of course, supports Mr. Holland in his attack on the Matrons' Council, and offers Lord Raglan his superfluous advice. Wherever we find a suggestion for nursing reform the great obstructor of professional nursing progress must inevitably come to the fore with his feeble objections and coarse abuse. This is part of the game.

At the same time our advice to the Chairman of the Welsbach Company is to devote the time for which he is paid a high salary to pulling this over capitalised and mismanaged concern out of the abyss. The wretched shareholders are still awaiting a dividend. When are they going to get it? That is a question which Sir Henry Burdett had better answer before attempting to bully a society of women who have proved themselves quite capable of successfully managing their financial and professional affairs without his interference.

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