

3. That instructions be given in case of fire that after sounding the alarm all emergency doors should be open.

4. The jury desired to express their highest commendation of the heroic and praiseworthy conduct of the staff, particularly Dr. Seward and the nurses on duty in the annexes, by whose exertions so many lives were saved, as also to Inspector Lambert and the police in their effective aid.

5. The jury further expressed their deep sympathy with the relatives and friends of the deceased.

It is to be regretted that the jury failed to criticise the nursing arrangements, as we consider five nurses on night duty to watch and tend 320 lunatics, many of whom were sick, deplorably inadequate, it is especially regrettable as the Medical Superintendent gave it as his opinion that the number of nurses on duty was "enough." We recommend the Asylums Committee of the L.C.C. to give careful consideration to the question of an adequate supply of nurses in all asylums under their authority.

A most able article from the pen of Professor Lane-Poole, on the much-discussed question of "Qualified Nurses," appeared in a recent issue of the *Morning Post*. It is specially interesting as proving the grip which a scientific and logical mind has of a subject which is quite apart from the lines in which it ordinarily moves. It proves, moreover, the value to trained nurses of the co-operation of trained thinkers and educationalists when the organisation of their profession is seriously taken in hand. Could anyone be found in the nursing world to give such lucid expression to the unanimous conviction of trained nurses that the appointment and certification of "qualified nurses" at the end of a year's training, by the Local Government Board, would be a *faux pas* of the first magnitude?

The Professor puts the case thus:—

"There are no degrees in a nurse's efficiency: she must be ready for all emergencies, and no one who knows anything whatever of the subject will venture to maintain that she can learn all this in one year's experience. Three years' training is the prescribed qualification for superintendent nurses and higher grades of nurses in separate infirmaries under the Poor Law; it should be the essential qualification for all nurses of whatever grade, as it is in voluntary hospitals. To set up a distinction in training, to create degrees of efficiency, is ruinous to the whole system and derogatory to the profession of nurses. In every other profession efficiency is a fixed minimum quantity, which may be increased indeed by talent and experience, but cannot be diminished below the minimum standard. In nurses that standard is admitted by all authorities to be three years' training. One year cannot produce it."

He further points out that the Department Committee abolishes assistant nurses, forbids the

appointment of untrained persons, and it substitutes an entirely new name for an old thing and calls it a "qualified nurse." This novelty is to be a "probationer who has undergone at least one year's training at, and obtained the certificate of, a minor training-school"—which is also another new name for an old thing, namely, the small workhouse where there is no resident medical officer. "What the report says in effect," says the Professor, "is this: Experience has shown that we cannot get enough trained nurses for the Service. We refuse to provide means for training them, and we fall back on half-trained nurses, whom we will call 'qualified,' though what we really mean is that they are not qualified." This is the position in a nutshell.

Of course, no pupil of less than three years' training can be regarded in any other light than that of a probationary nurse. Hence, while we are glad to observe that the Royal British Nurses' Association is actually memorialising the President of the Local Government Board on the subject of the qualified nurse, we regard the substitution of the term "staff nurse," suggested by the honorary medical officers of the R.B.N.A. (who alone took part in the debate on this question), as scarcely less mischievous than that of the Departmental Committee.

This latter lay body cannot indeed be too severely judged when we realise the present lack of standard in the nursing world. To take only four of the London hospitals with medical schools attached. It was only last year that the Committee of the Nightingale Fund of St. Thomas's Hospital, the mother of training-schools, decided to give a certificate at the end of three years' training, and ceased to enter probationers at the end of a year's training on the "Register of Nightingale Nurses." At the London Hospital, pupils are certificated at the end of two years' training, though they are bound for an additional two years' service. Middlesex Hospital still, we believe, certifies its nurses without any examination into their knowledge at the end of a term of three years' training, while at St. Bartholomew's the three years' standard of training and certification after examination has been in force for the last twenty-two years. Small wonder that the laity is puzzled as to what constitutes a recognised standard of training!

The Editor of the *London Hospital Gazette* invited in a recent issue the co-operation and interest of the nursing staff in making the journal thoroughly representative of the various workers in the institution, and in the January number we find the following letter:—

"Nurses' Home,  
London Hospital, E.

"DEAR SIR,—I am so glad to see that you have made it plain in the December *Gazette* that nurses may take an interest in the *Gazette* if they wish, and will

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