

division of England from the Continent—to which it was at one time joined—by the subsidence of the land which now lies below the English Channel, thus giving this country the position of an island fortress, the lecturer described clearly the reasons which caused London to be built on its original site. This site, bounded as it was by the Thames in front, the Walbrook on one side, and the Fleet on the other, and with a forest hinterland, was an admirable City of Refuge for a primitive people. In regard to the legends—and there are many interesting ones gathered round the city—Mr. Walker advised his hearers to preserve the legends, and the history would take care of itself. So we learnt that after the taking of Troy, about 1108 B.C., Brutus, the son of Æneas, son of Venus, discovered the favourable situation of London, and founded the new Troy. We heard the story of King Lud, and his two sons, Gog and Magog, and to pass from legend to fact, that the Walbrook still flows beneath the Mansion House, which is built on piles, as is also the Bank, that the derivation of St. Marylebone is not St. Mary the Good, but St. Mary's on the bourne or brook—the Tybourne, which ran from Edgware down to Westminster, and many other interesting things.

The Leicester District Nurses' Home, New Walk, was opened for inspection last week. Up to the present the nurses have lived in the districts in which they worked, but it is practically impossible, in the view of the forward march of surgery and medicine, that the requisite appliances can be properly stored in a small house, while it might easily happen that articles of surgical use were lying idle at one end of the town when they were urgently needed at the other. In a central home, too, the comfort of the nurses can be studied much more conveniently, and there is no doubt that the new centre will make for the greater efficiency of the work generally. The association is affiliated with the Queen Victoria Jubilee Institute, and the work is done for the poor free of charge. The expenses of furnishing the home have been defrayed by public subscription, and will not come out of the nursing fund.

On "copy" bent for his hospital newspaper Sir Henry Burdett has of late been touring around as a "self-constituted" inspector of hospitals, and his strictures on the management of the North Staffordshire Infirmary have stirred up a lively correspondence in the local press. All committees are infallible, and in Staffordshire they resent outside "interference" quite as warmly as elsewhere.

One "G. T. Arnold," a one time patient at the hospital in question, throws light upon nursing system. He writes:—

"The staff was wholly inadequate. One of my self-imposed duties was to see that four youngsters got their breakfasts. I boiled their eggs, put sugar in their tea, jam on their bread and butter, etc."—(Anyway, the patients are well fed.—Ed.) "This I did because the nurse and probationer on duty at the time were unable to attend to these youngsters owing to the more pressing duties of cleaning brasses, polishing lockers, sweeping, bed-making, etc.—work more suitable for a ward-maid than a nurse.

"Another of my self-imposed duties was the emptying of conveniences, and their distribution to the patients requiring them. No matter when I passed through the ward, I was asked to perform some such act by one or more patients. I can also remember some of the younger patients waiting so long that they suffered great inconvenience. I am not blaming the nursing staff. They were over-worked, the night nurse more particularly. Patients cleaned lockers, brasses, swept, realising that the nurses were over-worked.

"This under-staffing extends from the ward-maids to the resident physician and surgeons. I can well remember the death of an old friend of mine. He was taken with violent pains in the abdomen about seven in the morning. The night nurse did her best, and asked the patient to wait until the day sister arrived, somewhere near eight o'clock. This sister sent for the doctor; the doctor made a brief examination and injected morphia. This operation was done twice. At 8 p.m. the man vomited, and in about two hours he was dead. Had there been an efficient staff (in size) something might have been done for that man. The doctor was over-worked, and, by the way, does this fact account for the rapid changes of physicians?"

How about State Registration? Is it presumable that if a Central Nursing Council had defined a good practical curriculum of nursing education, to be enforced before the test of an independent examination and registration, that such obsolete conditions in a large general hospital in the country could exist? We answer emphatically "No." Then let Sir Henry Burdett realise that no one is more worthy of censure than himself, that for upwards of 20 years he has opposed by every means in his power every effort for nursing reform in this country. The editor of the *Hospital* is the very last man on earth who has a right to criticise his fellow men on their ignorance where hospital nursing is concerned. It is verily a case of the blind leading the blind. Anyway, hospital managers need not take this grinding of journalistic axes by a newspaper proprietor too seriously.

Some of the Governors at the Norfolk and

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)