

parsimony in the working of the hospital and a great lack of the milk of human kindness.

"A veritable parsimony in the working of the hospital—nothing but bare necessities anywhere; all these necessities, I freely admit, are good of their kind; a conspicuous absence of a full and efficient nursing staff, two only, for instance, in a ward occupied by 28 children; a hospital of 600 beds with some 50 nurses, while a hospital in London with an equal number of beds, St. Bartholomew's, has no less than 344 nurses; no flowers, no chairs in the wards, nothing but bare necessities. Of course not, the State has not the money and could not get the money to provide them, but in Great Britain we can, because our wealthy people are generous to voluntary hospitals.* All this will necessarily be threatened under the working of the Insurance Act.

"There is a great lack of what we in England would call mere humanity. How would our poorer patients care for this? After a severe abdominal operation, such as that for appendicitis, performed, it is true, by a skilful surgeon, wheeled back to the ward, there to be left to minister to his own comfort in distress, or to the "tender mercies" of a convalescent patient. Only those who have been through such an experience can realize the help and cheer of good nursing and pleasant surroundings. As a writer has recently said: 'There is no gratitude shown or expected, and little trace of the pleasant relationship which exists in the London hospitals between the patient and those who have made themselves responsible for his comfort—house officer, sister, dresser, and nurse.'

"But there is more than this; the effect of the system on medical education is the point of my letter. The German medical student does not come into close relationship with the patient, the patient would resent it. As Professor von Müller has well put it: 'Our patients have a right to be admitted. . . . This is the reason why our patients are not at all willing to be examined by the students.' But in our London hospitals the most cordial relationship exists between the student and the patient, so much so that a grateful patient will often remember the name of his dresser when he has forgotten that of the surgeon who saved his life.

"This close contact of student with patient is one of the chief reasons why our medical students turn out to be such efficient general medical practitioners. The existence of women of refinement and good breeding as nurses, and students with a thorough education and moral tone in our hospitals is an essential for the production of those highly-trained, humane, and reliable medical practitioners for which the British medical profession has always been known.

"It is this which is certainly threatened by the working of the Insurance Act when it comes to affect our large hospitals with their medical schools."

When the nursing departments of German Hospitals are under the personal supervision of highly qualified matrons, then, and not till

then, will be found the beautifying and home-making touch of the woman in the domestic arrangements of the wards. Then, and not until then, will a sufficiency of nurses be found on duty night and day, and the cruel overwork of German nurses in many hospitals cease.

We remember conditions in English hospitals thirty-five years ago, very much as those described by Mr. McAdam Eccles as seen in Germany—indeed, much overwork remains to this day. But we claim that the educated and trained gentlewoman, given adequate powers as Superintendent of Nursing, has in the past quarter of a century accomplished remarkable reforms. Let German women be given the same authority—they are just as capable, kind, and clever as their British colleagues. But they can't make bricks without straw.

Miss Nicol, writing on the treatment of burns, considers that the clothes in severe cases should not be removed until the shock has passed off. The patient should be kept warm, wrapped in hot blankets, clothes and all, put in bed with hot water bottles, and given hot brandy and water, either by mouth or rectum, to counteract the shock.

An unusual objection was raised at Ecclesall Board of Guardians' meeting last week to certain promotions in the nursing staff.

Dr. Jones wrote questioning the wisdom of the House Committee in appointing a probationer nurse (Miss Abbott) to the responsible position of charge nurse in the maternity ward.

Mr. E. Baker feared there was "favouritism" in this promotion. Miss Abbott, he said, had been taken as a probationer, although over age, and was now promoted over the heads of her seniors in service.

This was denied by the Chairman of the House Committee.

In the course of discussion it was admitted that the vacancy was only created by other changes made at the meeting of the Committee; and the other charge nurses would not be then aware of it.

The Clerk, in reply to a question, said he believed that if they were asked, the other charge nurses would consider they had been slighted by the appointment of a probationer to so responsible a position.

Mr. Edward Dickinson (who presided) felt that the appointment had been made hurriedly, and the other charge nurses should have had the chance of applying.

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