

London and the provinces. As usual, St. Bartholomew's heads the list, with a total of a hundred and fifty-four students. Guy's follows very closely with a total of a hundred and forty-eight—a remarkable proof this of the recovery of the School from the baneful effects of the fast fading controversy. The next two on the list are Middlesex and St. Thomas's, the former with a hundred and fifteen and the latter with a hundred. In the provinces the University of Durham stands first with a hundred and sixty-one students, and next comes Owen's College with a hundred and twenty-four."

Our readers are aware of the revelations which have recently been made as to the Nursing Department of the London Hospital. It is, however, a matter of common knowledge that as far as was possible the scandals have been concealed from the public by the Press, both lay and professional; presumably on the ground that it was better that the benevolent should be defrauded, that Nurses should be sweated, and that patients should be neglected, than that the Hospital should be hampered in these charitable proceedings by the cessation of subscriptions which would assuredly follow a general knowledge of the facts. We have regretted this silence on the part of our contemporaries, because we learnt at an early stage of the investigation that the movement was supported by persons who, when it suited their purposes to do so, could very easily compel a full disclosure of the truth. We have especially regretted the marked silence of the medical Press, because both the public and the medical profession will, when the facts become fully known, consider that, if no one else came forward, it should have done so, to protect medical men from imposture and the public from fraud, in such an important matter as the sending out of semi-trained pupils as "thoroughly Trained Nurses."

Events have proved our foresight to be correct. Quite sufficient became known to thoroughly undermine the confidence which the public had hitherto felt in the management of the London Hospital, while the uneasiness was increased at the evident efforts at concealment. And when it was made clear that instead of refuting the accusations, the Committee only abused a visionary antagonist; that instead of affording the Governors of the Institution full information of the serious charges advanced, the Committee simply demanded from them a vote of confidence in the dark; that instead of proving that the present arrangements were good, the Matron was permitted to write an article, to show that the grossest mismanagement was, until ten years ago, tolerated by the Committee; the confidence was irretrievably shattered. Because the most natural

inferences are that the Committee is probably as ignorant of the state of affairs in 1890, as it must have been in 1880, and certainly must be entirely subservient to an official, who is permitted publicly to expose now its incompetence then.

It has been stated on authority that the London Hospital has already suffered in its finances from the disclosures which have taken place, and if that be the case the results will be assuredly disastrous if more is divulged. If this is to be prevented the Committee must take immediate action, or it will be too late, because it is reported that very shortly the whole of the revelations which have already been made, and still more serious and damaging personal facts, will be widely published.

In the face of the statistics given by the *Lancet*, it will not be denied that the credit of the London Hospital with the medical profession has fallen enormously. For years the Medical School has been only second in numbers and importance to that of St. Bartholomew's. This October the entries are fewer than at any other large, and even at some very much smaller Hospitals. In fact the lesson of Guy's Hospital has been taught again, but with additional reason. And we cannot but fear that as the facts become better known the credit of the Medical School will sink yet lower and lower. Because there is no doubt that the Staff have permitted themselves to be placed in an entirely false position.

We have some hesitation in referring to this question at all, because, from the first issue of this Journal, we have studiously avoided all discussion of medical subjects. But this matter is also important in the highest degree to Nurses, because it directly teaches the disastrous results of successful, or even attempted, usurpation of authority in a Hospital, by whomsoever made.

In no Hospital with which we are acquainted do the Committee now seek to interfere, as formerly was not unusual, with purely medical matters. In some few instances medical men have essayed to conduct the business arrangements of their Hospital, and generally have renounced the attempt in despair at the expenditure of time and trouble which it entailed. In all well-organised Hospitals it is now recognised that the Matron is a colleague of the medical men, and that she has the entire control of the female staff, subject to them in matters medical, and to the Committee in matters financial. But in no other Hospital in the length and breadth of these kingdoms—excepting the London—do we believe that the Matron has asserted her right to control the Medical Staff, and that the staff have absolutely allowed the usurpation to be effected. When the Matron, or one of her irresponsible

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)