

are even told that these wonderful investigators have actually received their whole information from the Matron, and have not sought to gain the most fragmentary knowledge from other permanent officials of many years' standing in the Hospital. If this be so, the inquiry has been merely a misleading farce. We are the more inclined to adopt this view, because of the Report made by this Committee. We should like to ask one very simple question concerning it. Was this Report wholly or even partly dictated by the Matron, or did it entirely emanate from the three gentlemen nominally appointed to inquire into her management? There are many "internal evidences" in favour of the former view, or we frankly confess that we could not have imagined such an extraordinary proceeding possible—even from the London Hospital Committee. We should be glad to have such a possibility contradicted, and then would show in several instances the extraordinary manner in which the Sub-Committee has become imbued with phrases peculiarly affected by the Matron. We would suggest that if the Sub-Committee drew up their own Report it would have been better if—in accordance with invariable custom—its members had appended their names to it. At the end of the lengthy document come three dotted lines for the signatures, but their empty void is supremely significant of something anonymous.

We propose in due course to criticise this Report carefully, but for the present must consider the proceedings at the Quarterly Court of Governors on December 3rd. It was stated that within the last quarter yet two more Nurses have died at the London Hospital. We only wonder that any women are found willing to go to such a deathful place. Eight had died in the two years before the fact was made public in the summer, and now even that appalling rate of mortality has been just doubled. As all our readers know, it is the rarest event for a Nurse to die at other Hospitals. So far as our information goes, one death in five years is the average mortality in the large Institutions, and one death in eleven years at County Hospitals and Infirmaries. Yet the Committee of the London Hospital absolutely declines to recognise that forty times the ordinary mortality must mean something radically wrong.

The behaviour of the audience at the Court of Governors was a disgrace to Whitechapel. The Committee's reports took more than an hour to read, and were naturally received with attention. But when Mrs. HUNTER rose to speak there appears to have been a disgraceful exhibition of rowdiness, and it was evidently only owing to her pluck and determination that she was able to say anything at all. She drew attention to

the fact that every statement her party had advanced had been founded on personal first-hand knowledge, or sworn evidence, and that not one of her assertions could be controverted. She also noted that of the various defects she had pointed out in the Nursing Department, although every one was denied, three had already been remedied; for example, that the Night Nursing Staff had been increased by one-third. We are informed that the Chairman here flatly contradicted her, whereupon the rowdy element made the rafters ring with their applause. Mrs. HUNTER calmly referred the Chairman to the Blue Book and the Matron's and other witnesses' sworn evidence, proving her statement, whereupon the Chairman sat mute, but, of course, did not apologise for giving the lie direct to a woman. Mr. HUNTER and Mr. YATMAN attempted to speak, but found it was impossible. The Whitechapelites were allowed to howl down any criticism of, or any opposition to, the Committee. Sir EDMUND HAY CURRIE, whom the *Pall Mall Gazette* neatly defines as "by way of being an English gentleman," talked of "one woman sticking a knife into another," and was quietly extinguished by Mrs. HUNTER in a manner which is reported to have been exquisite to witness.

The conclusion of the performance was the adoption of the Committee's Report, only four Governors having the pluck to vote against the mob. Several of our contemporaries have made stringent comments upon the disgraceful proceedings and attempt to stifle all discussion and criticism of the Nursing arrangements. Mrs. HUNTER deserves, and, we doubt not, will receive, the greatest praise for her brave and utterly disinterested efforts on behalf of the Nurses at the London Hospital. She has evidently been treating the Committee as honourable men, who would instantly remedy abuses if they were quietly brought to their notice. We regret the rude disillusionment to which she has been subjected, and we deeply deplore for the sake of the Hospital the futile attempt which has been made to close up the whole matter. There is happily above the Committee a rather wider and more influential public, and to that we are glad for the Nurses' sake to learn that appeal will now be made. The scene shifts from Whitechapel once more back to Westminster. When it returns to Whitechapel, the last Act of this eventful drama will be played, and we prophesy that it will be a very short scene indeed.

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**FINISH YOUR WORK.**—Always finish work that you begin. One thing finished is worth a hundred half done. The completion of an undertaking gives more pleasure and profit than dozens of plans.

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