

Certificate that she was a thoroughly efficient Nurse.

Now the public will wish to know from the Committee a few simple facts in relation to this little story. Why was not Miss Raymond's dismissal reported to them? *For it never was reported.* Why was a Probationer kept in the service of the Hospital after being dismissed for incompetency after a year's trial of her services? What is the value of this Hospital Certificate if it is given to persons whom the Matron considers "quite unfit to become" Nurses? The Committee has deliberately broken the spirit, if not the letter, of its bye-laws by giving its Matron power to "dispense with the services" of any Probationer at her own pleasure, so long as she formally reports the fact.

Therefore it appears to our humble judgment that either Miss Raymond was most harshly and unjustly treated, and that unless she had found a friend in need, her whole professional career would have been ruined—because, of course, the Committee is aware that no other Hospital would have accepted her services; or else that the London Hospital Certificate has been degraded and made of no value by being awarded to a person declared to be incompetent, and the safety and comfort of the London Hospital patients have been deliberately disregarded, by a woman being placed in charge of them whom the Matron declared to be "quite unfit to be a Nurse."

Now we pass to a more public matter. There are daily advertisements that the London Hospital supplies "thoroughly-trained Nurses" to attend upon the richer classes outside the Hospital walls. It is notorious that to supply the demand thus created the Matron not only sends out the few Certificated Nurses on the Private Nursing Staff, but also semi-trained Probationers from the Wards. The feeble defence advanced is that the Matron considers women thoroughly trained at the end of a year, and the absolutely astounding statement is made that the London Hospital is "the only institution throughout the country that considers two years the minimum amount for permanent appointment on the Private Nursing Staff." Of course this is not only untrue, but most misleading. Untrue, because the Adelaide Hospital, Dublin, never sends out a Private Nurse until she has worked for two years in the Wards—misleading, because a number of Hospitals, amongst which may be mentioned St. Bartholomew's, Guy's, and the Middlesex, do not consider it honourable to put women on their Private Nursing Staff until they have served for the complete three years of training, and obtained their Certificate. But as to the illegality of sending out one year's

Probationers, whom the Hospital does not certificate as "thoroughly trained" until they have served for two years, there can be no real dispute. It is nothing less than an imposition upon the public—an obtaining of money under false pretences. Mr. Frederick Treves, a Surgeon to the London Hospital, has astonished everyone by attempting to defend this custom. He has stated that he has had ninety-three Nurses sent to his patients from the London Hospital, of whom seventeen were Probationers. He asserts that he does not think any Probationer has left his Ward, or that any Probationer that he knew anything about has left, without the Matron having spoken to him about it. From which it might be deduced that Mr. Treves would be favoured above all others, and that only the best Nurses, the "thoroughly trained" and most competent, would be sent to him. If Mr. Treves, therefore, is sent one Probationer out of every five and a-half Private Nurses he asks for, what proportion of semi-trained women must less influential medical men obtain? Mr. Frederick Treves, we observe, is one of the few gentlemen who signed the protest against Registration last year. He will, we hope, take an early opportunity of explaining to the public and his professional brethren the reasons which actuated him in thus opposing a system which would protect the public and medical men against untrained Nurses. And he will probably seize the opportunity of publishing letters from his seventeen patients who had semi-trained Nurses, stating that Mr. Treves told them individually that their attendants were not "thoroughly trained" in the eyes of their Hospital.

A good deal of public interest, however, centres in the question whether the Committee of the London Hospital is aware that this system has been in force. It is stated that the Committee does not know that the Wards are depleted of workers, the remaining Nurses therefore overworked, and the patients so much the less attended to, in order to provide Private Nurses for outside work. If this be so, the sooner the Committee repudiates all responsibility for the acts of its officials in this matter, and makes it plain to the public that such a system can never be perpetrated again under the shadow of their authority, the better will it be, not only for their own good names, but also for the welfare of the great Institution which they are supposed to control. Because, as we are prepared to prove, this iniquitous system is not only a fraud upon the public, but is most detrimental to the sick poor in the Wards of the Hospital, and utterly unfair to Nurses, both in the Institution and outside it.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)