

more, Miss POWELL, who is at the Cape, is being communicated with, and as soon as her reply is received we shall print it, and refer shortly to this matter again. We have only one more question to ask meanwhile. How comes it that, if Mrs. ADAMS was the lady to whom Nurse POWELL was sent, she was not called at the inquiry seven months ago to contradict, upon oath, what Lord Spencer termed "an important charge" (Q. 5,668)? Because Mrs. ADAMS would have been naturally asked to swear that Miss POWELL was never sent to any other "ladies or different people" than herself. Considering that Mrs. ADAMS has "no interest in the London Hospital," her knowledge of what transpires in that Institution is presumably small, and, therefore, she probably will not even venture to assert now, what she would have been requested to swear to at the inquiry. And if Mrs. ADAMS is not prepared to state that Nurse POWELL went to no one but herself, we hesitate to fitly characterise the object of her present letter. Indeed the quibble is so manifest that we should have considered the letter unworthy of any notice were it not that it admirably proves two very important points. Firstly, as we have already said, that the London Hospital authorities tacitly acknowledge the complete accuracy of every other statement made in the indictment of their management which we have published, by only attempting to controvert the one fact for which the witnesses were not prepared to give accurate chapter and verse—although such will now very shortly be forthcoming. Secondly, because it is an excellent illustration of the shifts and subterfuges by which the London Hospital authorities attempt to evade the truth. There is for example a remarkable and exact parallel to the letter now under consideration to be found in that mine of startling information, the Blue Book of the Minutes of Evidence given before the Select Committee of the House of Lords. Miss Homersham said (Q. 5,788), "I know that Sir Andrew Clark had a great objection to his Ward being overcrowded, and when extra beds were put in it, they were wheeled out about half an hour before he arrived, and wheeled back again within half an hour of his departure." Naturally this studied deception of the Visiting Staff aroused considerable interest and no small amusement. If the Medical Staff of the London Hospital were aware that the same treatment is accorded to each one of them quite impartially, they would be less inclined to support by unanimous votes of confidence a state of affairs which their Students and Resident Officers have openly lampooned for years past. But the Matron was questioned upon this revelation of Miss Homersham's—and be it

noted that the fact of the over-crowding was freely admitted afterwards by the House Governor and other witnesses. The Matron replied that she "never heard such a thing suggested till that moment" (Q. 6,526). Next she made the following statement: "I am authorised to say that his House Physician at the time, Dr. Wethered, is ready to come forward and prove that that was not the case" (Q. 6,529). And again (Q. 6,531), "At any rate, the House Physician will be able to speak to that? He is prepared to deny that it was ever done." But when this young gentleman—thus endowed by the Matron with omniscience—was produced, it was elicited that he was only House Physician "from the 1st of January, 1886, to the 30th or June" (Q. 7,304), whereas Miss Homersham, as the Matron very well knew, left the Hospital in April, 1885; although she deliberately swore that "Dr. Wethered was the House Physician at the time" to which Miss Homersham's evidence referred. Considerable surprise was expressed that anyone should have come forward under such circumstances, and, moreover, when it was well known that the Sister who ordered the beds to be moved was still in the Hospital. She was not called to contradict the evidence, which, to put it mildly, would have been the most straightforward method. And the reason for this abstinence advanced at the time was, that had the Sister denied having given such orders, two Nurses were at hand to testify that they had been ordered by her to move beds, and one of them actually assisted Miss Homersham on one occasion to do so.

The charge of deceiving the Senior Physician therefore was practically, tacitly, admitted. Yet the reply which the Matron who "visits the Wards once a month on the average" makes, is, that she had never heard such a thing *suggested*, and she calls one of the Physicians, who had not been in Holland Ward for five years previous to Miss Homersham working there, to say that this lady was "dreaming," and a House Physician, who did not enter the Wards for nine months after Miss Homersham left, to "deny" that what this lady was ordered to do, and did do, "was ever done"!

Such miserable quibbling subterfuges convince nobody, and only reflect additional discredit upon those who are driven to such straits to evade the truth. The one result which becomes clearly prominent is that the London Hospital authorities are unable to refute one single charge which has been advanced against their management. Nevertheless, they remain obdurate, so we must make another step in advance, which we hope, for the sake of the Hospital, will prove more efficacious in compelling inquiry and reform.

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