

feeding. The Nurses are often on duty for sixteen hours a-day, and are liable to be—and frequently are—roused out of bed in the night to take extra or special duty. The food is meagre and indifferent in quality, badly served, and worse cooked. Our contemporary, on September 3rd, commented upon this Article in an excellent Editorial, and has since then printed a number of letters from medical men, Nurses, and subscribers, nearly all of which strongly support and corroborate "A Probationer." The matter is so important to Nurses, that we have ourselves visited Glasgow and made searching inquiries. We find that the case has been understated rather than exaggerated, and that at the Western Infirmary, as well as at the Royal Infirmary, the condition of the Nursing Department is no credit to Glasgow.

So we warn the managers of these two Institutions that they would do wisely to institute a critical investigation, and then adopt cardinal reforms in the Hospitals, for which they are responsible, without delay. For the present, we will confine our attention to the Royal Infirmary.

The facts stated, and which we have ourselves verified, prove that the arrangements in force at the Royal Infirmary are most inefficient. The first principle seems to be, economy at any cost—but economy in hard cash, not in anything else. The Managers, it would seem, have striven to show as large a number of patients, at as small an expenditure in pounds, shillings, and pence, as possible. Economy is most important, we admit, but we maintain that economy at the expense of efficiency, when life and death are concerned, is the most ridiculously wasteful policy possible. But the Managers of the Royal Infirmary—doubtless well-meaning, excellent gentlemen as individuals—are, as a Committee, clearly imbued with the crass idea that the success of a Hospital is shown in its balance-sheet. The comfort—nay, the lives—of the patients do not figure amongst the pounds; the health and efficiency of the Nurses are not accounted for amongst shillings or pence; but these are by no means things of nought. And these matter very greatly to the public, which generously subscribes that the poor may be cared for and tended in sickness, but which certainly does not desire that Nurses should run the risk of being killed in order that patients should be cured.

The sanitary arrangements, especially with regard to lavatory accommodation, could not be believed except they were seen, and are a striking

exemplification of the absolute carelessness for the health of the Nurses which exists at the Royal Infirmary, Glasgow.

The fact that if a patient dies after a certain time in the afternoon, his body is not removed until the following morning, proves the extraordinary neglect of the feelings, and even of the safety, of the living.

That Nurses are compelled on Sundays to carry the patients' food "across the quadrangle"—presumably from the kitchen to the Ward—in fact, that their work on the Day of Rest is made more laborious than on any other, is a striking commentary upon the Scottish observance of the Sabbath, while it is nothing short of a disgrace to the Managers that such laborious tasks should be imposed at all upon their Nurses.

That a Probationer on night duty should be sent to bed at ten a.m., roused at two o'clock to attend a lecture, and then sent back to bed again, and expected to derive any good either from the instruction, or from the broken rest, is another specimen of the extraordinary good sense and consideration for the Nurses which if not speedily remedied will make the Royal Infirmary a byword in professional circles.

But Glasgow can congratulate itself upon its Press, and the Royal Infirmary upon its Medical Staff. Our contemporary, the *North British Daily Mail*, is fighting strongly for the Nurses, and the medical men have, as usual, come forward honourably and decidedly to support the Nurses' claim for justice. Finally, and probably because of this, the Nurses have been emboldened to stand their ground, and more than seventy have offered to corroborate, by personal testimony, the statements made upon their behalf in the Press. The result has naturally been that the Directors of the Hospital immediately opened an inquiry. An attempt was made, it appears, to intimidate the Nurses, but as they had the Press and the medical men behind them, it collapsed. Now the Directors appear to be resorting to a policy of delay and holding their investigations at irregular intervals. They are making a fatal mistake, because the greater the delay the greater will become the public distrust of those who shirk facing and stating the truth. The longer reforms are postponed the deeper will be the ultimate discredit to those who are responsible for the present condition of the Institution.

In the name of Nurses we thank our contemporary, and those who are acting with it to assist the workers in the Royal Infirmary to obtain the

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