

have to meet certain definite clear charges made against their management; that they have to answer to the public for the manner in which they have fulfilled the duties entrusted to them. It is childish to argue—as it has been—that these gentlemen are holding honorary posts, and should not, therefore, be judged for any non-performance of duty exactly on the same level as if they were paid for the work they do. We unhesitatingly assert that duty is duty, whether it be remunerated in credit or in cash; and that duty which is undertaken and neglected is discreditable to its non-performer. The citizens of Glasgow, who by their benevolence maintain the Royal Infirmary, have entrusted the management of their money and the control of their great Institution to certain gentlemen who, individually, probably are men of the highest integrity and public spirit. But a Committee, in accordance with an ancient dictum, has no soul, and our remarks apply in the abstract to the impersonal Committee. We contend that the gravest possible charges against such a body—mismanagement and neglect of public duty—have been brought against the managers of the Royal Infirmary, and that, as their own proceedings show, these gentlemen recognize that such an accusation must be inquired into. But our point is, that this inquiry should have been publicly made by an independent and quite impartial tribunal. For the accused to conduct an investigation into their own alleged shortcomings is, we contend, to make the inquiry a perfect farce.

And this bad beginning has been worse continued. After seven weeks of inquiry matters remain just as they were. Up to the time of writing this, no report has been made. Only one construction can be placed upon this; because if the managers had been able to disprove, or even to shake, the evidence submitted to them to support the charges made against their management, it may be taken for granted that they would have issued a report, to that effect, at least six weeks ago. The presumption, therefore, is very strong that the accusations have been found to be accurate in every particular. Then, we ask, why should this not be frankly admitted at once? It is human to err, but it is only honest to admit an error immediately it is discovered. Why do not the managers of the Royal Infirmary take a manly course, and, as they have appointed themselves their own judges, give sentence at once? The question is very simple. Are the charges of overwork of the Nurses and carelessness of the patients' welfare, true or untrue?

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They were succinctly stated, and could have been disproved, in a couple of hours, if they were untrue. If they are true, let the managers acknowledge their fault, and propose and carry into effect the necessary reforms. It is not their *amour propre* which has to be considered, but the health and efficiency of the Nurses, the comfort, and perhaps even the lives, of the sick poor, in their Institution.

But they are not increasing the public esteem in which they are held, by temporising and delaying their action, while they are doing irreparable harm to the Royal Infirmary by permitting the feeling of public uneasiness to continue and extend. Silence upon their part, therefore, is bad enough, but it has been made worse by their apologist, Mr. McEwen; for he has lifted the veil, and proved that, until very recently, the management of the Royal Infirmary was a sheer disgrace to Glasgow. His letter has, we regret to learn, aroused a bitter feeling, which will tend to make the settlement of the matter much more difficult than it would otherwise have been, and tend to complicate the very simple issues which are at stake. For their own credit, we hope that the citizens of Glasgow will not permit the present deadlock to go on indefinitely, but that they will insist either upon an immediate report from the managers of the Infirmary, or the appointment of an impartial court of inquiry.

Out of evil good may come, and at least it is a matter of congratulation that another great Institution at Glasgow has discovered mistakes in its Nursing Department, and has commenced to rectify them. It would be well for our contemporary, the *North British Daily Mail*, to seek for some information as to the condition of the Nursing in the Western Infirmary. But it has, in any case, done an inestimable service to the sick poor of Glasgow in drawing public attention to the mismanagement of the Royal Infirmary, and we doubt not that it will not relax its efforts until the evils complained of have been completely remedied.

As we go to press we learn that the managers have delivered their judgment upon the charges made against them. We have only received a telegraphic summary, and therefore speak with much reserve. But we are informed that, exactly as in the similar case at the London Hospital, the Committee completely exonerates itself from all blame, and then makes admissions which conclusively prove its neglect of duty.

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