

the management of all our English Hospitals, incalculable benefit to those Institutions as well as to the public at large, would accrue.

There was very little evidence given regarding the Nursing Department at St. Thomas's Hospital, and several of the most crucial questions were fenced aside and not repeated. It is, for example, generally known that Nursing matters at St. Thomas's Hospital are pitifully antiquated—the very regulations, apparently, not having been altered since 1873. There are several glaring anachronisms to which we will call attention in another column, as opportunities afford. At present we would merely and briefly consider the evidence given by Miss ISABEL ENTWISLE, a former Sister of the Hospital, and by Miss LOUISA GORDON, the present Matron. According to Miss ENTWISLE's account, the lot of a Sister at St. Thomas's Hospital is anything but happy. They nominally have rather less than eleven hours a day on duty; in reality the hours are longer. "Accident Sisters in the male wards do not go out all the week. The Doctor's rounds come once or twice a week out of their time off duty. They are called up in the night for operations, if any take place in their Wards. They are kept up after 10.30 p.m., if there is a prospect of an operation taking place. They go on duty an hour earlier in the morning, if they are short of Nurses through illness, or the Staff Nurse having a day off." The Sister at St. Thomas's, it seems, "makes her bed, and does part of her room" in her off-duty time—as a relaxation, we presume, from her Nursing occupation. She has half-an-hour for her dinner, but within that time has to traverse a considerable distance to and from the dining-room. It is note worthy that all these facts were tacitly admitted, because questions relating to them were fenced with. For example, the Matron was asked by Lord SANDHURST: "Did you hear what was said by the last witness about the hours of the Nurses, and was that correct?" to which she replied: "They are about ten hours a day." "Do the same regulations that existed then, exist now?" was the next question, and the answer—"They are on duty for ten hours; they get a little relief," requires no comment, so entirely—and wisely—irrelevant was it.

The next point very clearly brought out by Miss ENTWISLE is the extraordinary custom that "the Staff Nurses dine at the same time with the Sisters, at twelve o'clock, and the Wards are left for half-an-hour in charge of the Probationers."

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Thirty patients—perhaps many of them dangerously ill—left to the care of a couple of young ladies who may have only been in the Hospital a day or a week! After this revelation, we incline to believe that it is providential that at least one-quarter of St. Thomas's Hospital is unoccupied. Lord SANDHURST clearly realised the grave dangers of this arrangement, because he asked the Matron, "Do you think it a good rule to have the Sisters and the Trained Nurses away at the same time?" And, once more, the "canny" reply is most significant: "We have had a different arrangement of the dinner hours under consideration for some time."

We are not surprised to learn that, at St. Thomas's, Special Nurses are "ordered by the Doctor," because we have never heard, and never expect to hear, of any other Hospital except "the London," where such a medical matter is entrusted to the Matron, or, indeed, of any other Hospital where the Medical Staff would permit such a state of affairs to exist. But we are really astounded to hear that the barbarity of calling up Night Probationers from their sleep to attend lectures is perpetrated at St. Thomas's Hospital. The crass ignorance of expecting women thus roused from their scanty rest to derive any benefit from a lecture, to say nothing of the careless cruelty of the custom, only further exemplifies the autocratic mismanagement of this Institution. And the same sentiments are again revealed by the fact that St. Thomas's keeps to the ancient and reprehensible plan of permanent Night Nurses, which all progressive Hospitals have long since abolished as unhealthy for their employées, and therefore bad for their patients, while it is absolutely obstructive of progress in Nursing knowledge to its victims.

Further important statements, to which we have not space to devote commensurate attention, are: that St. Thomas's Hospital is not, of course, sufficiently abreast of other Hospitals to possess a Private Nursing Staff; that the Matron goes round the Wards every day, although the Hospital is a quarter of a mile in length, and considers it her duty to do so, a fact which, doubtless, seemed strange to their Lordships after the declaration of the Matron of the London Hospital that someone ought to be specially paid for such a duty; that the Matron of St. Thomas's has the power of suspending, but no power of dismissing, Nurses; and that St. Thomas's Hospital still maintains its antique custom of placing the names of all its Probationers, at the end of their first year,

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