

Probationers for longer or shorter periods at the London Hospital, came before the Lords' Committee, and, upon oath, made a large number of complaints against the management of the Nursing Department of that Institution. With great patience and interest the Committee entered into these charges, and heard, at even greater length, the defence of Miss Lückes, Matron of the London Hospital. The discreditable state of disorganisation, the extraordinary nursing despotism, which was revealed by the evidence, seemed almost incredible, and many of our contemporaries were persuaded to keep the matter out of their columns for fear of the injury which such revelations might cause to the finances of the Institution. We took a different view, for we considered that the welfare of a great public Charity, nay, more, the ultimate well-being of all Hospitals, was involved. We urged that a public inquiry ought to be held at once, that abuses should be probed to the bottom, and that reforms should be initiated at once. The Committee of the London Hospital did not take this honourable course. They appointed, to make a private inquiry, three of their own number, who disputed for one hour with one of the witnesses before the Lords' Committee, and then made a Report in which they declared that everything was as near perfection in the London Hospital as was possible in this sublunary sphere. A packed Court of Governors eagerly swallowed the Report and shouted down all opposing criticism. We, and others amongst our contemporaries, did not hesitate to term this conduct disgraceful, and since then the minority of honourable Governors have been able to express their sentiments without the exhibition of rowdy Whitechapelism. But the Committee have continued to deny, absolutely and altogether, that there was any foundation for the charges advanced against their management. Now, we have the independent judgment upon these questions, of gentlemen whose common sense, abilities, and discrimination are beyond all question, although they naturally have laboured under the serious disadvantage of lack of acquaintance with many of the technical questions which were brought under their notice. And we would impress upon our readers, this further most important fact. It

is impossible to mistake the feeling which has most powerfully swayed their lordships. They, like our contemporaries, have doubtless been privately told, times without number, that if they gave a direct condemnatory decision against any Hospital sustained by voluntary contributions—these, its life blood, would be instantly stanchd; paralysis of its work would ensue; and the sick poor dependent on its aid would suffer untold misery. So we find again and again that in referring by name to institutions, the Committee is most wary in the use of words, is in fact—

To their faults a little blind,
To their virtues over-kind.

And we have to turn to the impersonal conclusions to realise the real opinions which the Judges have formed upon the evidence.

On page 93, for instance, in reference to the London Hospital, we find the following paragraphs, the significant words of which we italicize. "The charges are *on the whole*, in the opinion of the Committee, not substantiated by the evidence. The evidence in regard to the health of the "sisters" appears inconclusive. *The Committee consider that the difficulties (which?) would have been avoided had the governing Board in charge of the Hospital at that time not allowed their authority to fall into the hands of salaried officials.* In justice to *the London Hospital*, the Committee wish to add that *it is an admirable Hospital*, doing work in a part of London where it confers inestimable benefits upon a very large and very poor population. They therefore think it is deserving of the greatest measure of charitable support.

It is noticeable that this is all the Committee could say in favour of this great Institution, and it bears out the views which we have above expressed. It is significant that the friends of the London Hospital have eagerly fastened upon this whereon to found an assertion that the charges were baseless. Most significant of all, is the fact that Mr. HENRY C. BURDETT, with his customary veracity, in quoting this paragraph, in his paper, suppresses altogether the sentence which we have placed in italics. It is manifest that no one has charged the bricks and mortar of the London Hospital—the Institution itself—of wrong doing, yet the Committee confine themselves

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