

tioners on trial," women taken on for a month—kept for an indefinite number of weeks, and then discarded at the unfettered will of the Matron; women nominally in the service of the Hospital yet who were unpaid, and whose very names and existences were unknown to the Committee. The Committee confined themselves to stating that during ten years about ONE QUARTER of the regular Probationers of the Hospital had failed to complete their training—a proportion which might well have excited their surprise. Of these "failures," the Committee blandly announced that about one half broke down in health, a fact to which we shall allude again. Nearly a third "broke their engagements"—a fact which is equally significant and unusual. And not less than one-fifth were discharged for misconduct or inefficiency—a glaring proof of extreme ignorance and incapacity of judgment on the part of whoever selected such unfit persons, which is the more inexcusable, as it was stated that the sixty or so pupils were chosen, each year, from about 1600 applicants. The Committee of the London Hospital, blind to these plain facts, came to the conclusion that the allegation was unjust and that no serious grievance existed.

The Lords' Committee tenderly avoid reference to the London Hospital, but relieve their consciences by making the following important statement: "While the Committee recognize that the Matron must be greatly responsible for the appointment and dismissal and general conduct of the Nurses, *they are strongly of opinion that no absolute power ought to be given to any Matron, but that the appointment and dismissals should be made by the chief executive authority of the Hospital.*" Further comment is needless.

II. "That with regard to the private Nursing Institution, insufficiently trained Nurses are withdrawn from the wards and sent out as thoroughly trained Nurses."

In reply to this, the Committee made a lengthy and rambling disquisition upon the difference between training and certification—which was wholly beside the question—but they confessed that of 184 women who had been sent out as private Nurses, 162 had been withdrawn from the wards for that purpose,

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and that of these, 33 had been in the hospital for less than one year—in fact, that one out of every five had, on the Committee's own standard, not been "trained," when palmed off upon the public as "thoroughly trained." The extraordinary excuses were advanced, first, that the Nurse was never withdrawn from a ward for private Nursing unless she could "well be spared," which, if it means anything at all, implies that the Committee had more Nurses in the Hospital than there was work for—a species of extravagance which it is difficult to credit; and secondly, that the Nurses were sent out sometimes for the benefit of their health—as if sick people applied to the London Hospital for attendants who were themselves ill! Such callous carelessness of the public welfare and convenience is almost incredible, but the statement is not only made in the Report of the Committee (page 5), but has also been repeated since, as though it was considered rather clever on the part of the authorities to palm off unhealthy nurses on the sick who happened to "live at the seaside or some healthy country place." These facts seemed to the Committee of the London Hospital to afford a complete answer to the second allegation.

The Lords' Committee tenderly avoid reference to the London Hospital, but relieve their consciences by making the following important statement:—"The Committee consider . . . that to prevent the wards from being denuded of nurses in order to bring funds to the Hospital, a separate staff should be employed for this purpose. They are of opinion that the minimum period after which a Nurse can be advertised as 'thoroughly trained' is three years." Further comment is needless.

III. "That the Nurses' food is insufficient and unsuitable."

In reply to this, the Committee with the innocence which characterises their other remarks point out that formerly—when the Matron was not responsible for the food of the Nurses—she frequently made complaints concerning the dietary. She was made responsible for these details, and the Committee, with sweet simplicity, believed that everything must now be perfect—because the Matron rarely or

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