

the crusade for which the NURSING RECORD was founded to conduct—the struggle to gain justice for Nurses, and protection for the sick, in which it has for now four years incessantly engaged, and which it will never relinquish until victory has been won; but the information in our possession has been too overpowering to permit us to be moved by one hair's breadth from our purpose. We have heard tales of grinding oppression, and of callous cruelty to Nurses which would have made the hearts of our readers throb with indignation, but upon which we have been constrained to keep silence, lest the cowardly tyrants in question should revenge themselves for the exposure, in a hundred ways of petty torture upon their helpless subordinates. It is only necessary to read the Blue Books of the Lords' Select Committee to realise how absolutely defenceless Nurses are, while they are being trained, and how, not only their comfort and their success, but even their lives are dependent on the caprice of irresponsible officials. Again and again, we have insisted that such conditions of affairs is a shameful scandal—that women who enter a Hospital in order to fit themselves by work and experience for the exercise of a skilled calling, should be treated not only with justice but also with some consideration; that they should not be starved and over-worked until their health and strength are shattered; that they should receive what they are legally entitled to—a consecutive term of training—and not be treated as marketable commodities, and have their education interrupted in order that they may be sent out as private Nurses to make money for the Hospital. We are not without hope that some day some Nurse will be found with sufficient respect for herself, for other Nurses, and for common honesty, to test the legality of this system in a Court of Law. Because, as we have often pointed out, it is clearly fraudulent to obtain money by false pretences; to promise to supply the sick with “thoroughly trained Nurses” and then send out semi-trained pupils; to promise a definite term of

consecutive training to women on condition that they shall serve the Institution during that term for a very small salary, and then to interrupt that training, and send the pupil out to learn what she can, without supervision or instruction, at the expense of the sick. One case would be quite sufficient, because the public indignation which would be expressed, putting aside the sentence of imprisonment which would certainly be passed upon whoever was proved to have committed the offence, would undoubtedly and immediately cause this scandalous system to be abandoned.

But, now, let us briefly observe how Probationers are treated at the Worcester Infirmary. The sworn evidence at the recent trial shows then, the following facts. Miss BELSEY suffered from a sore throat, and apparently had, at the same time, a temperature of no less than 103° Fahr. It is quite unnecessary to enlarge upon the significance of these two facts, the certainty that the case was a severe one—the possibility that it might have been of a dangerous or infectious character. The gravest astonishment will be felt that the evidence seems to imply that Miss BELSEY was not seen by a member of the medical staff. It is almost incredible that a matron should take upon herself to treat a case with such grave symptoms as those of Miss BELSEY, on her own account, and yet the following statement of Miss MAY JANE McLELLAND, can surely bear no other interpretation: “The rule is that if a Nurse has a bad throat, she shall report the matter to myself, and then if the usual remedies fail, I ask the surgeon to see it.” After the other revelations upon which we commented last week, it is difficult to feel surprised at anything connected with the Nursing Department of the Worcester Infirmary, but it is instructive to observe what “the usual remedies” of Miss MAY JANE McLELLAND are. The case was diagnosed as an “ulcerated throat.” From all the evidence which is given, it might have been a bad case of Tonsillitis of Diphtheria or of Scarlet Fever, and we cannot but feel that Miss BELSEY'S counsel should have been in-

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