

Miss Lonsdale on Guy's Hospital.

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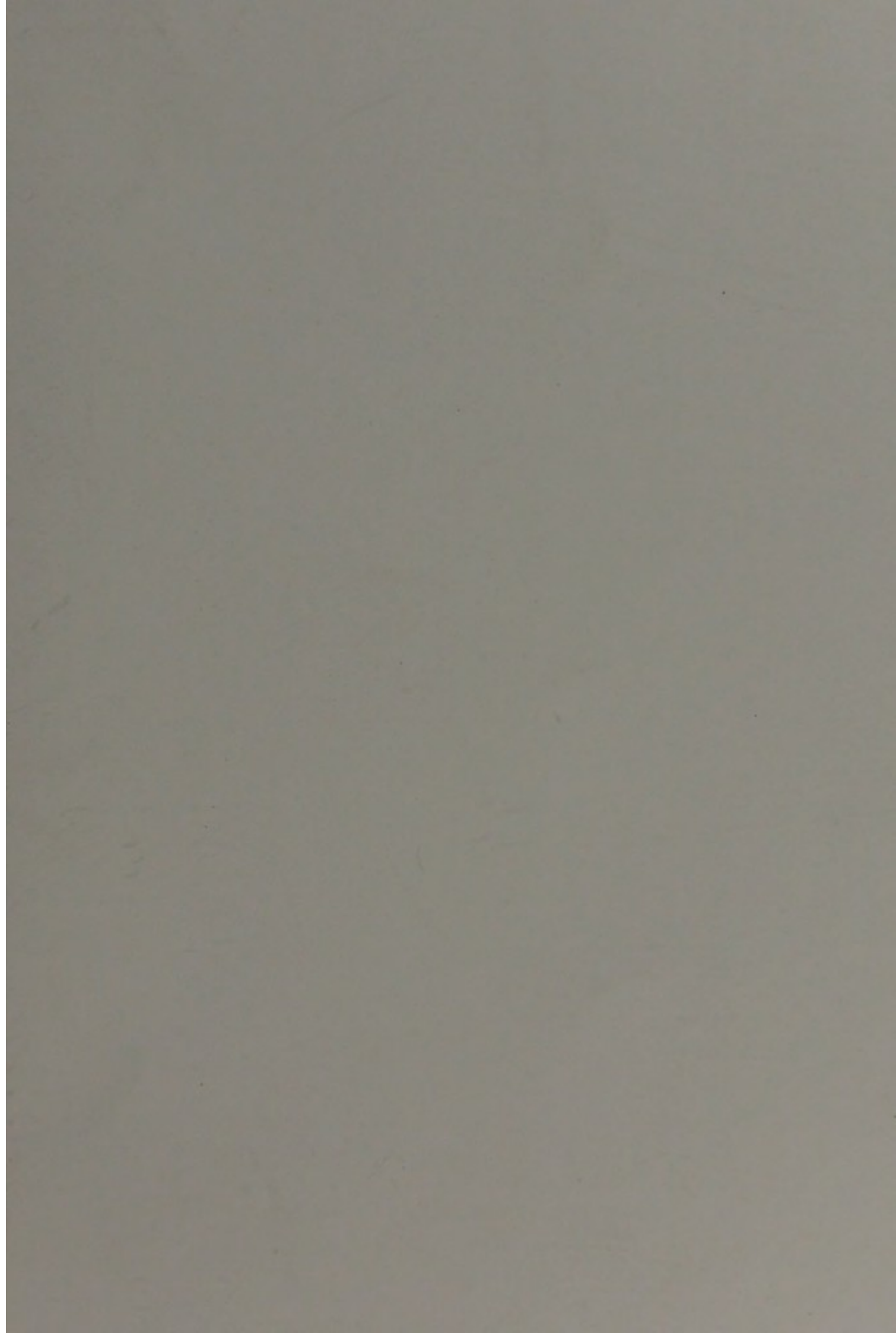
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MISS LONSDALE ON GUY'S HOSPITAL.

May. 1880

IN the April number of *The Nineteenth Century* there is an article on the state of Guy's Hospital, which, if it were approximately correct, would make the position of the authorities of the hospital—governors, treasurer, doctors, superintendent, and nurses of all grades indeed, of all concerned in it, except, perhaps, lady pupils—one of shame. The readers of that article, if they will follow my duller pen through these few pages, may judge whether its statements are true, or just, or temperate.

It is a public misfortune when an honourable and famous institution falls into disrepute, even if the disrepute is unmerited. Now it is not too much to say that the modest fame of Guy's Hospital is known and respected over the whole world, at least wherever public charity has been awakened to the light. Guy's is visited from Europe, Asia, and America, and, with one or two other great hospitals, serves as the standard of comparison for foreign countries when competing with our own in that worthiest aim of civilized humanity—the aim which arises from the desire to relieve human suffering. Neither is Guy's Hospital without guardians, suited, one would think, to preserve from rottenness any institution worthy of their care. Its governors are princes, bishops, nobles, statesmen, financiers; and although these governors are for the most part very far away, like Jupiter or the stars, or the pure ether, and even if *magna Dii curant parva negligunt*, yet Guy's is not so small as upon such a principle to fall into neglect under the shadow of great names, especially as one of their number, like the sun, resides nearer for our especial benefit, and, according as his rays are powerful or feeble, is the hospital fruitful of good or otherwise. This Resident Governor is called the Treasurer.

The position of Treasurer to Guy's Hospital, albeit perhaps not one

of much external note, is one of urgent responsibility, for whatever happens there is more or less directly his own doing. And Guy's has indeed been fortunate in the quality of its Treasurers. I need only mention Mr. Harrison in the last generation, and Mr. Thomas Turner in our own. Their names will bring into the minds of all who are interested in Guy's Hospital the grateful esteem that is due for the devotion with which during long years their practically unlimited power was used wisely and most beneficently. Speaking of Mr. Turner, who has recently retired from the office of Treasurer, it is well known how he used his vast abilities to keep the hospital and school always in the highest possible efficiency; how his skilful management of its funds enabled him to enlarge the hospital, adding extensive new wards; how he watched over every department, never either neglecting his own great duty nor allowing any neglect of duty within the hospital. He permitted no abuse that his universal care could detect; and an abuse must be small to escape the penetrating eye of Mr. Turner. Yet the readers of Miss Lonsdale's paper on "The Present Crisis at Guy's Hospital" would, if they are carried along, as Miss Lonsdale evidently is, by the freedom of her style, think very terrible things of Guy's Hospital and of all that is there, except, perhaps, as I said before, of lady pupils.

The paper in question professes to draw a contrast between the "old system" and the "new system" of nursing—the old system being defined as that existing at Guy's up to October, 1879, and the new system being something yet to come. In order to effect her comparison, Miss Lonsdale draws a group of portraits of the nursing women, superior and inferior, employed on the "old system" and on the "new system" respectively, and, as Miss Lonsdale shows exceptional skill in drawing fancy sketches of nursing women, there is no doubt which sketch charms and which repels as you look on this picture and on that.

But fancy portraits in skilful touches do not settle questions in real life. The question at Guy's is not whether our nursing system called "old" in Miss Lonsdale's sketch is better than the "new system" of her sketch, but it is whether our carefully developed plan of nursing as it really was is a better thing than some new system as it is, or, rather, as it is always promising to become. This is a very different question, not to be decided by insulting sketches of our sisters and nurses, but by facts; and, unfortunately, facts are less attractive than fancy sketches.

Now the first thing I will do is to give my reader a sample of Miss Lonsdale's fitness to become an historian of a sister of Guy's. Let us look at Miss Lonsdale's contrast of the sister, or head nurse, under the old system and under the new, and then I will state the facts of the case as it applies to Guy's Hospital.

For convenience of contrast I will place the two descriptions alongside of each other. They run thus:—

THE OLD SISTER.

"Both kinds of nurses were under the control of a woman called the sister in each ward. Under the old system it was necessary for her to be little more than an experienced housekeeper. . . . She kept and gave out the wine and spirits ordered by the doctor, and either partook of them or not as she felt disposed."

THE NEW SISTER.

"The sister is a woman of good general education. It is desirable that she be not only a gentlewoman by birth and education, but a thorough woman of the world as well, able to enter into and to deal with the wants and difficulties of men and women of diverse dispositions. Above all she must be able to put some degree of her own spirit into those who work under her."

Now there is no doubt which of these sketches would be preferred. But when the reader has read the above description of the "old sister"—a woman, a mere housekeeper, suspected of helping herself to the patients' wines and spirits,—I will ask him to look at the following statements of fact. First let me give an official account of the general position of our old sisters, with which I am favoured by the experienced and distinguished Superintendent of Guy's Hospital, whose name is well known as perhaps the best living authority on hospital management. Dr. Steele says:—

"The sisters or head nurses, so far back as 1830, and probably before that time, were drawn from among women in the middle ranks of life, and were betwixt 30 and 40 years of age at the time of their appointment. In the majority of instances the sister has been a lady of education and refinement, who sought the office from straitened circumstances."

But the reader will better realise the truth of the matter if he will look down this list of the positions in life of some of our "old sisters:"—

- A. Sister of ——— Ward, displaced under the new system. Daughter of a colonel and wife of a major in the army. A lady whom it is no discomplement to Miss Lonsdale to say that she is in derivation and in culture quite Miss Lonsdale's equal.
- B. Sister of ——— Ward, displaced under the new system. The sister of a physician who graduated with honour at the London University. Herself a lady of liberal education.
- C. Sister of ——— Ward, displaced on account of her religion. Granddaughter of a baronet; daughter of a physician. A lady of large private fortune who commanded the highest respect, not only in her ward, but throughout the hospital.
- D. Sister of ——— Ward, displaced through an attempt to move ladies from ward to ward. A niece of the late Bishop of Winchester. A lady I will not attempt to praise.
- E. Sister of ——— Ward. Daughter of a colonel in the army, an excellent sister, displaced through the attempt to move sisters from ward toward.
- F. Sister of ——— Ward. The last mentioned lady's sister. Also very efficient; displaced through the same cause.

I choose these ladies because, as they have recently left the hospital in some instances to make way for sisters of the new system, I need not put any old sister at present with us to the annoyance of having her position in life published before the hospital.

Now I will leave it to the reader to characterise Miss Lonsdale's description of these ladies as women, mere housekeepers, who "kept and gave out the wines and spirits, and either partook of them or not themselves as they felt disposed." The new sister, who is to be a gentlewoman by birth—at least, "it is desirable" that she should be so—will have charge of the patients' wines and spirits with exactly the same license. Why does Miss Lonsdale throw so galling a slur of guilt and shame on the one group of "women," and say nothing of the equal temptation which surrounds the "gentlewoman by birth?" Is it possible that, as Jupiter's messenger said to the hesitating lady,

Un tel emploi n'est bassesse,
Que chez les petites gens.
Lorsque dans un haut rang un a l'heur de paraître,
Tout ce qu'on fait est toujours bel et bon.

The next step would be for me to state the positions of an equal number of the new sisters. I will, however, leave that for Miss Lonsdale to do, as I desire not to hurt the feelings of any. It may be well, however, to notice that until last October the salary of a sister at Guy's was £50 a year; whereas the new system, or, in other words, Miss Burt, so far from tending to attract a higher class of applicant, offers only £35 a year, with some "advantages" not intended to be a complete compensation for the £15 deducted. Is it hoped to get a better article at a lower value? At any rate, the old sisters could better afford to pay for their own refreshments.

So much for Miss Lonsdale's sketch of a Guy's sister. That she should write in such ignorance of the facts may be explained by her having been only three or four weeks at the hospital when she presented her article. And that she should write in such a state of feeling may be explained, I trust, in the same way; not having yet been long enough at Guy's to be reached by the mutual respect, and self-respect, which have prevailed there at least as long as I can remember.

Next, a word upon the statement our authoress makes as to the matron, whom she describes as a "kind of upper servant or housekeeper." In this contemptuous phrase she does great injustice to Miss Loag, who held the office of matron for thirty-three years to the satisfaction of the Governors and of everyone. Miss Lonsdale says of her ideal new matron:—

"The matron, superintendent, or whatever else she may be called, ought invariably to be a gentlewoman, possessing what are perhaps the rarest of all qualities, true tact and discernment. It is scarcely necessary to say that she must be a highly trained nurse, and must have acted as a sister herself. As soon as she becomes matron, the very word suggests what is expected of her. She is the mother of the members of the nursing staff. Just as the medical men are absolutely supreme with regard to the general treatment of the patients, their diet, medicines, &c., so is the matron the supreme authority with regard to the general rules of nursing. The discipline of the whole nursing staff, and the care of the moral and physical well-being, as well as the thorough training of each nurse, is solely under her control."

This account of the ideal matron of the new system describes Miss

Loag our late matron, who was trained as a sister of the hospital, and who fulfilled with unfailing ability all the duties Miss Lonsdale indicates. The only difference is, that in describing Miss Loag one would not make "absolute authority," "gentlewoman," "supreme authority," so prominent. For she is one of Nature's gentlewomen, and her tact and sweetness were such that whilst her supremacy was always admitted it was never asserted as absolute. Her supremacy was so natural, it was taken for granted. Further, this lady whom Miss Lonsdale flippantly tickets as an upper servant went beyond the ideal matron's qualifications, finding time in her vacations to visit English and Continental hospitals, thus enlarging her experience of the care of the sick.

I say all this about the *personnel* of Miss Lonsdale's contrast, because, in fact, the so-called new system is not well described by that term, for it is not so much the system that is new as the people that are so; and this new system represents in short a determination to change the *personnel* of Guy's sisters, and to substitute for our old sisters the closest approach possible to a religious sisterhood of an aristocratic turn,—at least mixed with and looking to aristocracy. Only for some such religious object could any lady write as Miss Lonsdale writes. Hence it is that social superiority is thrust forward at every turn as the character of the "new system."

Hence the old sister is scornfully touched as an ex-charwoman, and a housekeeper, not to speak of a suspected thief and tippler; whilst the new sister, it is suggested, will be a sister *in the proper sense of the word* (the italics are mine). An air of aristocratic fashionable sisterhood pervades the article. The sister should "be not only a gentlewoman by birth," the matron "ought invariably to be a gentlewoman," whilst we are informed that "nursing is rapidly becoming a fashionable mania." But the nurses under the "old system" are usually drawn from "the class to which the domestic charwoman belongs." What fine contempt! The domestic charwoman! The gentlewoman by birth! Before Miss Lonsdale the class that furnishes the domestic charwoman might be a kind of cockroaches. Does the lady know that the class in question is the class of domestic servants? Does the lady know how the domestic charwoman is furnished by the class? This is usually the way: some gentlewoman by birth or otherwise uses up the good years of the poor woman's life in domestic service, and then when she is no longer fit for service the poor woman becomes a domestic charwoman; or the good servant marries and loses her husband, and forthwith is a domestic charwoman to keep her children. I could give striking instances if any one has not enough about his own doors.

But the practical point is, that the class of domestic servants has always furnished the great bulk of nurses, and still continues to do so. Is not the new matron of Guy's now engaging domestic servants for nurses on the "new system" and applying at ordinary registry-offices for them? It is to this source you must come when you want a large

supply. The idea of nursing vast hospitals by stray units from the "better classes" is not a practical idea. There are not enough of them, even if their betterness were an excellence in the requisite kind of goodness. There must be a sense in which the term "better classes" is justifiable; but it is not an all-round sense. In Mr. Gladstone's charming "*Juventus Mundi*," he remarks reflectively and good-naturedly on his favourite poet's expression, the service of the *inferior* to the *good*. But the cultivated Greeks did not all think so; Plato makes the acquisition of great property by the good citizen almost as difficult as the Gospel teaches it to be for the good man. In short, the better classes may not be the better nurses. One meets many poor who have been kept poor by their readiness in giving of their little means, as one meets some rich who grew so by heartless grasping greediness. And it is a libel on even the class to which the domestic charwoman belongs, to speak of them as if none amongst them have any kindness for the sick, or are capable of being trained into good and gentle nurses. Not that Guy's is nursed by women who were ever actually engaged as "charwomen." Miss Lonsdale dares not say that; she rather throws out an innuendo insulting the whole class to which they belong—assuming that no good is to be found in and developed from them. But what is wanted as raw material to make a nurse from, if I may so speak, is not this or that class of society, but native kindness of heart, gentleness, sweetness, cheerfulness, and love of nursing work, which are happily found in some persons of all classes. If good-nature is not born in the applicant, in vain you train her. Kindness is Nature's gift. There is nothing so exhaustingly enervating as trying to be kind when you don't feel so, and the object of your forced kindness never mistakes it for the real thing. It may, then, well take, as Miss Lonsdale says, one, two, or even three years' regular and severe training to bring down the mere sentiments of a gentlewoman by birth, bitten with a fashionable mania, until she can affect the doing various menial offices for the sick of the despised poor. But I have seen many a poor man's wife become a most skilful nurse in as many weeks, and my belief is that those of the poor who are naturally kind, and have fair abilities, make better nurses for the poor than do the subjects of a fashionable mania. I have watched some of the nurses in Guy's Hospital in their years of duty, and have wondered if any could ever think it true that there is no place of fit reward for service so sweetly, kindly, and skilfully rendered to the sick, with labour so unsparing yet so poorly paid for here. And now to see these women sneered at in a widely-read Review as "of the class to which the domestic charwoman belongs," and spoken of as if selected by the hospital authorities for their low character and bad habits, is so cruel it cannot go unanswered. Let me commend to these "sisters in the proper sense of the term," George Herbert's sweet lines,

"Man is God's image, but a poor man is
Christ's stamp to boot, both images regard,"

and ask them to believe a thing which in observing them you might at

least suppose them to forget, that such truth applies to poor women as well. But the mere wish to go to heaven for doing deeds of "charity" on a despised class rarely leads to much real kindness, and is no criterion of the presence of the heartfelt helpfulness which is the native gift requisite in a nurse, and which is just as likely to be found in a poor woman. Why, if Miss Lonsdale will turn to the Prayer-book, whose words, at least in a printed form, are never far from at least the outside of a "sister in the proper sense of the term," she will read "He fashioneth their hearts alike;" and that the poet-king spoke but simple truth of all classes, any who have seen our poor nurses working at Guy's may know well. Or if she will take an author on a subject antithetically cognate with her own "Sister Dora" she will find in Legh Richmond's "Annals of the Poor" evidence of a fund of kindness in the poor not to be despised when you want good nurses.

I will here quote what Miss Lonsdale dares to say of the staff of nurses with which the matronly care of Miss Loag, under the supervision of the Treasurer, supplied Guy's Hospital. After sneeringly saying they are from the class to which the domestic charwoman belongs, she describes our nurses as follows:—

"Taken into the hospital after a superficial inquiry or no inquiry into their character at the end of three months, less or more, according to the convenience of the matron these women would be promoted to the position of head nurses. . . . Physically and morally untrained as they were, they were then immediately liable to be put in charge of patients who were more or less seriously ill, by day or by night as the case might be; the main duty which was inculcated on them from their first acquaintance with hospital work, being, that they must study the character and special requirements and fancies of the particular medical man or surgeon under whom they were placed, with a view of gaining his approbation by every means in their power. . . . In the evening, by arrangement with the matron, who was a kind of upper servant or housekeeper, the old-fashioned head nurse went out to take her hardly earned holiday, too often, alas! at the nearest public-house. She came back at the regulation hour, more or less the worse for drink as the case might be, and went to bed to sleep off the effects of it; no inquiry was made into her condition. . . . I am far from saying that every nurse under the old system was drunken or dissolute, but I do say that, as a rule, their moral character was unsatisfactory."

Now if that description were true, it would cover with disgrace those who had charge of the care of the sick in Guy's up to October, 1879. But it is not true; nothing but a plea of ignorance could save its author from the taint of deliberate falsehood. The same official informant will describe for me the true derivation, character, and supervision of the nurses. Dr. Steele says:—

"Day and night nurses were selected from the ordinary class of domestic servants, from which the great bulk of high-class nurses is still derived, but the gradual refinement which has taken place among most ranks of society, has also influenced this branch, and in hospital life has rendered it necessary to relieve the ordinary nurse of many important duties associated with the order of the sick room, which their predecessors cheerfully fulfilled. From this cause, a large addition was made to the nursing staff, about ten years ago, by the introduction of ward maids, young women of good character who professed no special vocation for nursing, but who assisted the nurses in cleaning, fetching and carrying

provisions and medicines, and who made themselves otherwise useful in ward work. These young women were fed and lodged in the hospital, and it occasionally happened that some of their number aspired to be nurses, and if it could be shown that they had been attentive to their duties, and had had a fair education, they were permitted to act as assistant or probation nurses for a time, to test their fitness for the new calling, at a wage considerably less than what they had received as ward maids. The greater number of the nurses, however, five-sixths of the whole, were applicants of good character, who thought they had a special vocation for the work, some of whom had previously been at other hospitals, and all had to undergo a probation of *at least six months* before they were appointed to special duties, and then only under the supervision of an experienced sister, who was responsible for the nurse's efficiency. Nobody is aware of the duty being inculcated on them to study the fancies of the doctor. No special arrangement was ever made by Miss Long concerning ward maids taking the duties of nurses, as she always made provision that the assistant nurse should be present in the ward during the head nurse's absence. The charge that the nurse went to the public-house and came home the worse for drink, is a gross libel on a class of defenceless women. The nurse invariably reported herself on her return to the sister; who, if she had seen anything wrong in her conduct, would have reported the same to the matron. There are no facts to prove the assertion in the statement. To allow a nurse her recreation at the time the medical man makes his visit is simply absurd. If the women are respectable, there can be no possible objection to their visiting their friends from five to eight or nine o'clock at night; the women prefer it, and it is but fair that their wishes should be considered."

Such is Dr. Steele's description of the nurses at Guy's, and Dr. Steele, whose sterling uprightness is above any praise of mine, has been twenty-five years at Guy's watching every detail of the nursing. But Miss Lonsdale, who gives no proof of her statements, had only been at Guy's about as many days, and those days were not under what she calls the old system, but under the "new system," in other words the new matron. Long before Miss Lonsdale came, the old nurses to the number of sixty, or two-thirds of the whole, had left the hospital. How then could she, without advancing one tittle of proof, write these bitter slanders upon women whom she had never even seen? It may be enough to say that the sixty or more women who recently left Guy's through the new matron's action, were all eagerly taken by other hospitals, and inquiry was not made as to character in more than half a dozen instances. It was proof enough, both of character and efficiency, that they had been trained at Guy's. The physique of the old nurses would be some test of character. Bad habits bring bad health in average people. And on this point it may be said that during the six months ending 1st December, 1879, when the old nurses left, only one nurse or probationer per month was invalided; whereas since that time, that is, with the nurses of the so-called new system, there have never been less than five or six on the sick list. And this is particularly to the point, inasmuch as Miss Lonsdale accuses the authorities of neglecting the health of the nurses up to the new matron's arrival. In fact, it is the general opinion of the medical staff of Guy's that the nursing under the new system or new matron has fallen off thirty per cent. at least. The nurses are less strong and less skilful, decidedly so as a general rule, although three or four women

who are of a class superior to the general run, and have exceptional skill, are made the most of, and put prominently forward like the fine strawberries on the top of a bad punnet.

It would be strange if Miss Lonsdale's imagination which proves so strong in fiction when dealing with our nurses of the day hours, did not offer creeping pictures of the wretches who glide into Guy's wards with the dusk as night nurses. At all hospitals it is known how difficult it is to obtain the same degree of attention by night as by day. And the staff of Guy's have to keep, and do keep, a constant eye upon the great danger of abuse which at once creeps in on any system if darkness is allowed to hide from the watchful care of the day the course of events in the night. As to our authoress's statements, I will not again follow them in detail, but only say that what she affirms about our night nurses,—“The nurses helped themselves from the patient's private store of food, and, whenever it was practicable, from the patient's allowance of wine and spirits as well: those nurses who were not too sleepy, washed their things, thus converting the hospital into a drying-ground for the benefit of the patients,”—is not only untrue but malignantly so; and when she says that as they were not seen by the visiting medical staff, “therefore a still lower and less intelligent class of women might with propriety, it was thought, be employed on night than on day duty, and constantly very aged and feeble, to say nothing of hopelessly drunken, women were considered fit for nothing else but this branch of duty,” and goes on to affirm that a night nurse might “hire, as she called it,” a charwoman friend to do her duty,—we reach a degree of freedom of Miss Lonsdale's imagination, with its ready turn for colouring things with theft of wines and spirits, and general intoxication, which we suppose is a masterpiece of her power of counter-touch, and will act as a foil to the sketch of “Sister Dora.” But a better knowledge of the poorer women would have surely kept Miss Lonsdale from thus making a public sacrifice of their character. For though no sympathetic pen has given highly-coloured sketches of their lives, and though in Miss Lonsdale's touches they look wretches indeed beside Sister Dora, yet is it not as when the man in the fable, to prove man's superiority, showed the lion the painted figure of a man overpowering a lion; the lion replied, “But suppose a lion had made that picture?” And, indeed, I should be glad now to see the life of a poor Guy's nurse by another poor and sympathetic Guy's nurse who possessed Miss Lonsdale's graphic power. Then might more secret good than Sister Dora's find as open a reward. But alas! if instead of pictures it is truth you want, how are you to get it? The truth of any life is so hard to find. The story of a life founded on facts is so easy to tell if you are graphic. And the public want a good story rather than a true one. Truth and fact in stories are in such queer relation, for truth may be compared to the course of the wind, and a fact to a ship under sail moving in and by means of the wind. One often sees that the ship may run very nearly contrary

to the wind (so that sailing ships actually cross each other in the offing going in opposite directions by the same wind): this is done by managing the rudder of the ship. And, similarly, by influencing the rudder of a fact it may be made to run very nearly opposite to the truth of the matter. Of course this is only in appearance, as seen by onlookers; but then suppose the whole thing may be done for the sake of the onlookers. Thus can facts be warped across the course of truth, and so warped by a certain oblique obedience to truth itself. I recommend this mystery to the consideration of Mr. Tylor in his able study of the origin of myths and folklore: for which study Saint Dora bids fair to become quite a striking instance during the transitory summer-day memory of Mudie-readers.

Dr. Steele thus states the fact with reference to our night nurses:—

"The night nurses were selected from probationer nurses, and acted as night nurses before being taken on day duty. In consequence of the ungenial character of their work, they were paid £2 more annually than the day nurses; with one or two exceptions they were never either aged or feeble; and the charge of drunkenness levelled at them can be sternly denied by those who were put in authority over them. If a night nurse were not equal to her duty and wished to be relieved of a night's work, she applied to the matron, who employed, as a substitute, an experienced woman in the partial employ of the hospital, and the nurse had to forfeit an equivalent part of her pay. This is the charwoman friend Miss Lonsdale refers to as being hired."

It thus appears from Dr. Steele's statement that the night nurses were better paid; that far from being worn-out women their term of night duty came before their term of day duty; and their character was good. I must again leave it to the reader to characterise Miss Lonsdale's statements. But Miss Lonsdale, as usual, contrasts with her imaginary night nurses of the "old system," her equally imaginary night nurses of the "new system," who thus appear:—

"The night and day nurses are all of one class, recognised only as regularly trained head nurses, and they take it in turns to perform night and day duty. In some cases the sisters also take it in regular turns to act as night superintendents."

This may do very well as a fancy sketch, but let me cite a lady night superintendent, who, under the newest system, had charge of one of the best managed small hospitals in London. This lady allowed me to take down her words as follows:—

"The hospital had fifty-six beds, and the superintendence of these was frequently as much as I could properly do. In slack times I might have managed one hundred beds. The difficulty arose chiefly through the fact that many new and untrained nurses were first put upon night work; of these there was generally one decent one. The night nurse who does her duty must be a very good woman."

So much for Miss Lonsdale's boast of "regularly trained head nurses . . . night and day." But here I wish to notice, as evidence of the fitness of Miss Lonsdale's sketches for real life, the above very able lady's statement of the amount of work she could accomplish—viz., fifty to one hundred beds, and then bring forward Miss Lonsdale's ideal night-superintendent who should be "in charge of probably the whole number

of patients contained in the hospital during the night, and responsible for the conduct and discipline of the night nurses." The beds at Guy's are 695, in thirty wards. Now the reader may imagine the position of a night-superintendent appointed to the care of this vast gathering, or rather vast scattering, of sick persons admitted to the 695 beds by a kind of competition in severity of illness, let alone the care of all the nurses, and he will understand why the physicians and surgeons of Guy's Hospital think it necessary that the sister of every ward should still be held responsible at night in case of serious occurrences in her ward. She knows the cases; and every sister is anxious to be called should danger arise to a patient of hers. The doctors have no objection to a night-superintendent, whose office it should be to keep the nurses to their duty if necessary, and it appears more necessary with the new nurses: such an officer would be welcomed by the medical staff, whose sole object is to see the nursing of the hospital done in the most efficient manner possible.

And, indeed, there can be no doubt that Miss Lonsdale has been misled into making the unsparing yet utterly groundless charges with which her paper is redolent, by overlooking this truth—a truth perfectly well known to all who watched the progress of Guy's Hospital under Mr. Turner's rule—namely: That the nursing at Guy's has long been advancing in the quality and efficiency claimed as exclusively belonging to the so-called "new system." So that the nursing at Guy's, without being perfect, has long been very good, and increasingly good. The only things that the "new system" has brought to Guy's are: (1) the new matron; (2) very formal caps and collars upon the nursing women; and (3) too often a lugubrious grey oppressive air as they move around the beds, stifling to cheerfulness and hopefulness. These phenomena, with the addition of (4) a few *soi-disant* "lady pupils," who have come to the hospital under an incorrect description, being really trained nurses, form all that the "new system" has added to Guy's. We have long had whatever efficiency in nursing any mere system can give, and our nurses are good or bad according as more or less can be got out of each by patient and skilful training. But this "new system" tries to include (5) something in the way of a mysterious sisterhood, "in the proper sense of the term," and we do not want that. Our unanimous opinion is that religious sisterhoods injure English Protestant Hospitals, render them more expensive and less efficient, and introduce a most unsatisfactory state of feeling. But we hope there is no real danger of any religious sisterhood establishing itself at Guy's, and what is grieved over in this affair of the so-called "new system" is not so much what it created as what it destroyed, in sending away sixty really good nurses. So that our authorities have played the part of that dog in the fable which let go substance to grasp shadow. For as to the sisters and nurses which have come in place of those who are gone, we find them to be for the most part inferior women, whose relative inefficiency is very imperfectly supplemented by the

new matron, and her impracticable rules, hitherto only promulgated to be forthwith found unsuitable and withdrawn.

Miss Lonsdale's representation of the contest at Guy's as a struggle between "old" and "new" system does not correspond with the facts of the case. On this point Dr. Steele says:—

"The struggle between the Treasurer and the medical staff was not as to the manner in which the nursing of the hospital should be conducted, so much as with reference to the capacity of a lady whom the Treasurer had appointed to take the supervision of the nursing department, and who from want of tact and discernment at the outset, led the medical staff not unreasonably to suppose that she was utterly unsuited for the office."

And here the intelligent public will see the secret of the bitterness of this outburst. The medical officers of the hospital unanimously desire, for good reasons, that the object of the matron shall still be, as it has hitherto been, to find good nurses for Guy's wards; whereas the new idea, or so-called system, is to make the object of nursing at Guy's, not the nursing of the sick at Guy's, but the training of nurses for private families.

The reader of Miss Lonsdale's paper might be struck with this—that she never, or hardly ever, says a word about the sick. The nurse, who should be the means of relieving the sick, is made an end in herself. And I will say further, that the so-called "new system" sacrifices the good of the patient to the training of the nurse, and hence is opposed by the doctors. I could give very striking instances to prove this assertion, but will now only say in general that the new matron aims to take away all fixity from the nurse's relation to the ward and the patients; making her a moving object, sent from ward to ward by the matron that she might be "trained," whilst the wretched patient, recently from under some terrible operation, to the management of whose peculiar susceptibilities the nurse has just become accustomed, is subjected suddenly to a woman who knows nothing about him, and who agonises him by her want of experience of the way he is most easily turned.

Yet it may be thought by some that private persons should suffer for the public good; and on this principle that the pains of the patients should be allowed, if thereby nurses could be trained at Guy's in a superior manner, and to the advantage of the public. But I will now show why nurses cannot be trained at Guy's up to the high standard private nurses should attain, and I will proceed to show where they can be so trained. Let any one read Miss Lees',* or still better Miss Wood's, excellent Manual on Nursing,† and he will more readily understand what I am going to say, which, however, is not abstruse. Shortly stated, the fact is that nursing with these ladies is an art that includes those proceedings which at Guy's Hospital are practised by the students for the purpose of obtaining necessary skill in them. When Miss Lonsdale says nurses do not nurse at Guy's, the question, of

* "Handbook for Hospital Sisters," by Florence Lees.

† "Handbook of Nursing," by Catherine Jane Wood.

course is, what she means by "nursing." Throughout her paper runs, in more or less insulting terms, the assertion that our sisters and nurses are ignorant of nursing; our sister, she says, "had never seen nursing practised, much less had she been taught to nurse herself; she was therefore not only wholly incapable of training her nurses and probationers, but she was unaware of her own ignorance," and our nurses "learnt, it is true, all that their superiors were able to teach them about the art of nursing, but being totally without experience of their own, physically and morally untrained they were."

To my colleagues at Guy's the most inexplicable parts of the curious squib which Miss Lonsdale has been allowed to let off in *The Nineteenth Century* are the extraordinary statements she makes as to the utter want of knowledge of nursing, which characterised the women who were our sisters, and the immoral drunkards who took the place of trained nurses at Guy's. What then is the nursing unknown to Guy's nurses? In vain we ask. Miss Lonsdale says we doctors are not likely to succeed in learning :—

"Even were the medical men allowed to see clearly, it does not follow that they would be able to distinguish good from bad nursing except by results. A doctor is no more necessarily a judge of the details of nursing, than a nurse is acquainted with the properties and effects of the administration of certain drugs."

What are all these mysterious details of nursing of which doctors are not judges?—which it takes "one, two, or even three years of severe training" to acquire; which doctors cannot know "except by results," and not even so, because "they do not see very far," and which the "nurses take care that their eyes shall be blinded to." In the name of goodness what is all this occult and recondite mystery? It is of no use asking. It is like pursuing the philosopher's stone, or as the old riddle says, like Neptune, it is "a seeking what does not exist." It is a figment of the imagination of the lady nurse: to compare lofty things with lowly, it is as visionary as Mrs. Gamp's great standard of excellence, Mrs. Harris. Nurses, you know, are an imaginative class. But, of course, it is simply nonsense to talk thus of a mystery of nursing hidden from the shortened sight of the doctor. True there may be things important in the minds of lady pupils which would not be seriously noticed by surgeons or physicians, as when one of these young lady pupils recently wished for turpentine and a feather to tease from the depth of the skin of a poor person's feet such remains of the grime of years as soap and water would not touch, so that his foot should be quite snow-white like her own.* But the fretting of the sick poor with mortifying and frivolous trivial attentions is the least of the risks they may run at the hands of trained nurse lady-pupils.

In passing, however, I would here ask the reader to reflect that the poor, whose circumstances keep them roughly cleansed, are well aware how much nicer it is to have tender white feet, if you can afford it; and they are sensitive enough to feel the subtle touch of offensive

* A fact.

superiority involved in impossibly scrupulous attention from a fashionable mania, from whom they would shrink if their legs would carry them. And I speak their feelings fully when I say that to fix upon them, when ill, frivolities which they would escape if well, is to take advantage of their weakness in a way little conducive to the kind object of a charity endowed for their benefit. Indeed, *common sense* is a first requisite when you mean kindness to an inferior; some sense which is common to you and your inferiors. I would refer my readers to a great woman's searching analysis of the mental nature of the French poor.* The poor are much the same in England according to my observation.

But the right line in this not unimportant aspect of the case must be left to the feelings of the person attending the sick poor—feelings which are perhaps felt more truly sisterly by those who know the taste of poverty. There is, however, a far more serious direction in which the would-be imitators of the semi-mythical "Sister Dora" will find that their place is not Guy's Hospital, and that is in such instances as the following: A "lady pupil" at Guy's recently turned a typhoid fever patient over to wash his back, contrary to the physician's express order, indeed such a thing at such a time put his life in imminent risk; when it was well said that at that time "he should not move from his bed if the house were on fire." Also an obviously dying wretch was set groaning up and put through the regulation wash, though he was expected to die in a few hours, and did die in less. Such things as these we doctors are able to see and to know, and we will not allow them; holding as we do that nursing must be as hitherto—subordinate to our judgment.

In short, the fact of the matter is, that there is nursing and nursing, hospital nursing and private nursing, and the whole disturbance at Guy's arises from these ladies not seeing the distinction. Miss Lonsdale scarcely dares say that the sick at Guy's are not properly nursed. What she says is that the nurses do not properly nurse them. But there are not only the nurses at Guy's; there are the students—about 450 students to about 600 patients; and these students take all the higher nursing into their own hands, in order to acquire skill in it. Higher nursing is minor surgery. A glance through the contents of Miss Lees' or Miss Wood's book will show that the trained nurse looks to the application of surgical bandages of various kinds, dressing wounds, cupping, arrangements for preserving certain temperature of parts, &c.

But at Guy's a nurse does not do these things, because they are always done by the students. At Guy's a nurse is expected to be strong enough and skilled enough to lift or raise a patient with the least possible fatigue and suffering on his part, to keep his bed nice, to cleverly change his personal and bed linen, to present his food in fit form, and persuasively aid his taking it if he is very ill; to attend well to his cleanliness; and, beyond this, to wait upon the medical officers, senior and junior, in their attendance on the patients, and to obey the direc-

* George Sand, "Promenades autour d'un Village."

tions given by the doctor. I need not tell anyone who knows Guy's, that all this has been done, and well done, and increasingly well done, at that hospital. The sisters of our wards were trained in and brought up to all this, and no person was admitted as under nurse until she had had six months' practice in all this as a probationer, and had acquitted herself to the satisfaction of the experienced sister and of the matron.

To deny the name of nursing to these duties,—to teach nurses to claim to be superior to waiting upon the junior medical office-holders of the hospital according to the spirit of Miss Lonsdale's complaint, viz.,—

"Unnecessary annoyances which thoughtless young men constantly inflict upon the more refined class of nurses"—[*observe! not of patients!*]"—"he looks upon them as mainly there to answer his questions, to prepare his dressings, to wait upon him while he performs his duties to the patients, and finally to set right any disorder, and to clear away any mess that he may choose to make in the performance of these duties. This last mentioned task is by no means inconsiderable," all this must set such women above their proper duties as hospital nurses. There may be nurses who are of too refined a class to prepare dressings and clear away after the students. But Miss Wood's advice as thus expressed, "only let her leave her fine-ladyism at home; do not let her come fancying hospital work is a pleasant dilettantism,"* may be of use to such "more refined class of nurses." At any rate their place is not at Guy's Hospital. Their place is at some hospitals where there are no students or few students, and where the nurses themselves can perform the duties in question, and if possible have other persons to wait upon them. At Guy's, nurses have always willingly done the more menial work which is and must continue to be their proper service so long as we have 450 students to obtain practice from the cases of 600 patients. If we took away these duties from the students and gave them to the nurses, there might come a time when doctors would perchance know as little about nursing as Miss Lonsdale erroneously supposes them now to do. But we cannot at Guy's give the higher nursing up to the nurses. It is essential to the existence of the medical school that the higher nursing should be done by the students.

We may here find some explanation of Miss Lonsdale's paper which would bring it within the borderland of rational productions, in spite of its spirit of violent pique. If so, the lady did try to mean something, although she must have grown so angry and dangerous to herself, and in a less degree to others, as not to see the point in question. To properly recognise this point will clear up the whole "present crisis at Guy's Hospital."

That sweet illusion, the repudiation of which by the medical officers so much disturbs Miss Lonsdale, the dream that at some not distant day the ideal nurse of Miss Lees' book would be trained at Guy's under happy, high-born, radiant sisters, whose sidelong influence on the now unspeakable students and doctors would gradually raise them from their present incredible habits;—that sweet illusion she must see fade further from her vision.

* "A Handbook of Nursing," by Catherine Jane Wood, pp. 40, 41.

But I ought to develop more clearly the point now in question—namely, the difference between hospital and private nursing. I believe there could not be just now a more beneficial social impulse than one that would induce women, gentlewomen by birth or otherwise, to establish schools of higher nursing and minor surgery at any hospitals that have no medical schools, or at the parish infirmaries. Such schools would be under the auspices of the surgeons of those institutions, who would for proper consideration doubtless undertake to supervise the teaching of women to do many of the things now done at Guy's Hospital by the dressers and reporters.

The modern trained nurse for private sick-rooms is a great improvement on the sick nurse of former times. But she is not nearly what she might be. How vastly far short she falls of the ideal nurse of Miss Wood's Manual! When do we meet in private sick-rooms with nurses who can keep good reports of the progress of the case, observing and describing the various symptoms the doctor is not there to witness; who can use bandages and strapping intelligently; dress antiseptically; preserve local temperatures, without requiring so much direction that one could quicker do it all one's self? The surgeon or physician at an hospital which has a medical school attached, enjoys a great advantage over the surgeon or physician in the private sick room because he is aided by skilled students as dressers. To these young gentlemen fall all such duties as bandaging, dressing wounds, superintending the use of baths given for purposes of cure, and doing numerous other of the like services, such as form the lower branches of what is called minor surgery. Especially, they undertake all the reporting of the cases, so that in all these important matters belonging to the private nurse, she cannot gain experience at Guy's. But although the students of Guy's must do these things to obtain practice in them, yet there is no reason in the world why nurses should not be trained elsewhere to do the work of dressers and reporters; and in fact to become as invaluable in the private sick-room as the Guy's dressers are at the hospital.]

Here is a great future branch of duty ready to be taken up by intelligent women. I am sure that medical gentlemen in private practice would gladly avail themselves of the aid of nurses so trained as to be to them the equivalent of the hospital surgeon's dresser or reporter, in cases requiring the like degree of attention.

If intelligent women are desirous of supplying a higher and a more lucrative service than that usually rendered by women in the sick-room, it is quite within their power. High-class nursing may be put on a far better footing than it ever will be put upon by the ravings of a fashionable mania. Let ladies found schools of higher nursing and minor surgery, where they can acquire and teach a degree of skill which will deserve some such title as "Dresser-nurse." With a good "Dresser-nurse" in the home of his private patient, the doctor in attendance could feel the same satisfaction in the intervals between his visits, as he now vainly envies in the hospital surgeon who knows a good dresser is in charge

of his case to give help and to observe and record progress. There would soon be a demand for Dresser-nurses, and such an office should be well paid,—say at least four or five guineas or more per week. In this country of abounding wealth, so many are ready to make any pecuniary sacrifice which is necessary to obtain really efficient aid, that nurses capable of doing duty as dressers and reporters would find ample demand for their services.

The mistake is to attempt to train private nurses at Guy's. I cannot too frequently assert that the practice involved in acquiring the requisite skill is taken up by the students. And, indeed, it is to a misconception on this point that the "crisis" at Guy's owed its origin. For at first thought it seems natural to suppose that where the arts of Medicine and Surgery are studied by young doctors, there the art of nursing would best be studied by young nurses. And with such a belief, it is easy to become quite sanguine in the hope of seeing good nursing schools at our great medical schools. It seems like a good idea. When you hear it, you may be inclined to say, "Very good! yes! I wonder why it was not thought of before!" But wait a little! Your experience has surely shown you that there often is good reason why those who are practically engaged in affairs do not do things which seem obviously proper to you outside, or to you who have just come into office.

And if the above considerations had been duly weighed before committing anybody to an impracticable course, there would have been no crisis at Guy's. I had with me this morning an influential Governor and Past Almoner of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, whose name would be well-known. This gentleman made the following remarks:—

"For the last 25 or 30 years there has been no condition of nursing at St. Bartholomew's which would justify any such description as Miss Lonsdale's. Our present state is one of improvement, we seek to improve the efficiency of our nurses, and we are 50 per cent better than we were, and are going on slowly and surely. We have the full concurrence of our medical staff, who are working with us to bring about an advancement as far as possible. We do not turn our hospital into a school for nursing, having always in view the preeminent claims of the patients; and we, of course, exclude any religious sisterhood."

That hospital is not praised by Miss Lonsdale, who reserves her praise for Charing Cross, King's College, and St. Thomas's Hospitals.

And here I beg my readers' attention to the fact that the first two hospitals praised by Miss Lonsdale are nursed by the Anglican Sisterhood of St. John's House. I do not quite know how St. Thomas's Hospital, which shares her praise, is nursed, but everyone knows that hospital, standing as a handsome elaborate byword of vast funds spent in architecture and decoration, whilst its wards are empty for want of money. Now if the spirit of St. Thomas' should lay hold upon the resources of Guy's, we might see the funds of Guy's Hospital spent in decorations and extravagant forms of nursing whilst the wards which Mr. Thomas Turner's prudent management added to the hospital might be emptied for lack of money, and thus would come about a state of things strangely contrary to the historic economy of Guy's Hospital,

whereof it may be boasted that hitherto every available penny of income has been scrupulously devoted to the good of the sick poor. St. Bartholomew's, I repeat, is not praised by Miss Lonsdale; the aim of its Governors is not reputation in a fashionable mania. I think I may say that St. Bartholomew's and Guy's Hospitals have up to the present time always been governed in the same spirit.

The above quoted remarks of the St. Bartholomew's authority, which he allows me to publish, however, exactly describe the progress and the feeling at Guy's Hospital. Nursing schools and sisterhoods as little suit our circumstances at Guy's as they suit St. Bartholomew's, and are no more likely to be established at the one than at the other.

Let me, however, here clearly state, that so far as nursing can be taught amongst students, Guy's has long done a great deal indirectly in such training of nurses. Under Miss Loag, our late matron, very many women learned at Guy's all that constitutes hospital nursing. We also had many lady probationers amongst us, and I am sure that ladies in charge of Nursing Homes will bear me out when I say that the women trained at Guy's were amongst their best nurses. I have heard this commonly remarked. But the difference between the late matron's idea or "system" and the new matron's idea or "system" is this, that the late matron's principal object was to find, train, and develop good nurses for each ward at Guy's Hospital; to be plain, that is the duty of any matron of Guy's Hospital. Next, she tried to keep the nurses thus developed, and use them for the good of the patients of Guy's, and to this end, after their probation was complete, allowed each to become attached to her ward, and grow proud of the excellence of that ward, if capable of such worthy pride as petty officers have in their regiment; growing also attached to the sister of the ward, so that the prevailing feeling was one of harmony within each ward, with resulting cheerfulness and mutual trust, favourable to that atmosphere of good hope which so aids the recovery of the sick. What is it now? If the new matron, with the object of making public nurses, instead of caring for Guy's patients as her duty is, takes away all attachment of the nurse to the ward, moving her rapidly from ward to ward, making her a stranger to the sister temporarily over her, what is the natural result of such a course but the departure of all the friendliness of mutual trust from amongst the co-operators in the wards, replacing for friendly regard and cheerfulness an estrangement which chills the feelings that surround the sick: and all with the object of training private nurses where only hospital nurses can be trained. To this end are we to have none but new "trained" hands, whilst those with some experience successively leave us for private work? Then the service of our wards will resemble that which would prevail in unfortunate training ships if they were manned with "trained" lads, who, unhardened by experience, might lose their heads in a gale of wind to the fatal danger of the ship. Indeed, the unflinching promptitude and steady purpose which

experience alone can give, are often wanted in the sudden dangers amongst the terrible illnesses that fill our wards.

I need not pass from this part of my subject without pointing out that if my suggestion of schools for higher nursing at small hospitals and dispensaries be adopted, the greatest benefit can at the same time be conferred on a class of the sick poor which is sadly neglected by charitable persons—I mean the sick poor of our parish infirmaries. Without saying that the nursing of the sick in the parish infirmary is ever so revolting as that which Miss Lonsdale's fancy sketches ascribe to Guy's Hospital, there is no doubt that much good may be done in raising the tone and efficiency of the nursing furnished for the sick poor of our parish infirmaries. I say this without desiring to throw any aspersion on these institutions, many of which I know to be well conducted.

And thus in the end some good may arise out of the unfortunate publicity given to this subject; if, as a result of it, we see means obtained for the teaching of a far higher class of nurses than are now supplied. In short, something between nurse and medical woman, educated in numbers at the smaller hospitals and parish infirmaries.

But, in the meantime, Miss Lonsdale's paper makes it abundantly clear that her "new system" for Guy's Hospital, which has not a word of kindness for the patients, turns its eye towards the improvement of the doctors and students. She asks:—

"Are not practices and experiments indulged in by the medical men, and permitted by them to the members of medical schools, which it is understood had better not be mentioned beyond the walls of the hospital? If, however, such things should be talked of by the class of women who are employed as nurses under the old system, their character is such that little credence can be given to their word."

The description here used might be from notes taken at a criminal lunatic asylum. The "practices" here referred to, are evidently something beyond faults of manners, and matters amenable to moral influence. For she says:—

"Further and quite apart from this . . . Under the old system, doctors and students alike were at no trouble to consider either their own manners or the feelings of the nurses"—[*observe! not of the patients!*]"—"and there was little occasion. They became accustomed, therefore, to behave in the wards exactly as their natural disposition prompted them. That the actual results of such liberty are not desirable either for nurses"—[*observe! nurses first!*]"—"or patients, may easily be imagined. The presence of refined, intelligent women in the wards, imposes a kind of moral restraint upon the words and ways of both doctors and students, which some of them desire to get rid of, and I have no hesitation in saying, that it is against this, as much as anything else, that they are now at Guy's Hospital resisting with all the might they possess."

And she speaks of our wards as "remarkable for their low tone of morality." Upon this point the Superintendent writes:—

"This paragraph contains a gratuitous and foul aspersion on the conduct and character of leading members of the medical profession, which can only be refuted by members of their own profession and by gentlemen having the management of hospitals. It has always been the boast of the authorities of the hospital that the students seldom, if ever, abuse the privileges they enjoy. The

patients invariably express themselves as being indebted to them for their care and attention, and for many acts of kindness rendered to them, to which the outside world are strangers. Whatever the character which medical students obtain out of doors, their conduct in the wards of the hospital has been most exemplary, as can be readily attested by thousands of witnesses.

"The charge 'that the wards were remarkable for their low tone of morality' is not supported by a tittle of evidence. It would be important to discover what meaning is to be attached to the phrase 'low tone,' and to whom it applies. The patients represent the lower class of workpeople, who have little opportunity, if so inclined, of practising any immorality within the walls of the hospital. And if not the patients, the charge must necessarily refer to the resident officers, who it has hitherto been thought have possessed the confidence of the Governors. All seem implicated in this charge, and the governing body cannot be doing its duty until the matter is finally cleared up."

It will be well for the public, now that a fashionable mania overtly reaches out a wild hand towards the sick poor at Guy's, to note the utter disregard of the patients in the urging of the claims of these "sisters in the proper sense of the term," who aim rather to bring their influence to bear upon the doctors and students. "The presence of refined intelligent women in the wards imposes a kind of moral restraint upon the words and ways of both doctors and students, which some of them desire to get rid of."

But I have shown that it is nothing new at Guy's that the sisters should be gentlewomen, and the nurses a superior class of women. And, indeed, it is true that women at Guy's are appreciated according to the proofs they give of usefulness, kindness, and charity, rather than according to their station in life. A new and strange spirit would enter if the doctors and the students could be turned from the sick to the nurse. What is it these lady nurses desire? Does Miss Lonsdale think that in the presence of suffering whose intensity calls for deep pity,—nay, whose awful hopelessness too often rather moves our reverence,—we are to keep a slant eye on refined and intelligent women? Does she offer to men, so heartless as to be untouched by our crowds chosen for misery, the help of female influence?

However, when she has been longer at our hospital, she will find that at Guy's it is much as it is in the rest of the educated world. Professed refinement, if obtruded immodestly is met with a smile. And as to true and gentle refinement in women, to the physician their refinement is as it is to their best self; to be held in high esteem, yet so understood as by one who knows it may, when carried to excess, encourage frailties which are apt to put on a morbid form, and to seek the presence of the doctor rather to be influenced than to influence.

And even the "uncouth" medical student has another sphere besides Guy's, where he is the son, or perhaps the sister, of a woman not without due intelligence and refinement. Miss Lonsdale might know that these young gentlemen are sons of the clergy, even up to Bishops; or of lawyers, even up to her Majesty's Judges; of officers in the Army and Navy; of scientific men up to the Astronomer Royal; or of medical men, and, at least, they come from respectable homes. And although fashion is

apt to go backward for its inspirations, a fashionable mania will scarcely justify the re-opening of a system of insults to medical students which belongs to a bygone age. Such insults, however, pass away unnoticed by our students, who, whilst professing no greater perfection than other young men of equal position in life, yet have a knowledge of the true state of affairs which belies their accuser; and Miss Lonsdale should, when she wishes to wound, always take care that she does not enlist the conscience of her victim on his own side. Thus would she reach a more effectual refinement of cruelty; and it seems necessary that some refined and intelligent women should be informed that there are varieties of refinement and intelligence, not all equally sure to produce good effects on those around. For though a right refinement constitutes the goodness of the "better classes," yet it is the rightness rather than the mere refinement that constitutes the goodness in which they are truly better. And such a right refinement is before all things unobtrusive, and is the natural opposite of the sensational thing that loves prominence and recognition. The good refinement is not the sort you pride yourself in and force upon others. True goodness is a thing ascribed to others rather than felt inside, since the days of the Pharisee and Publican.

And with reference to the medical staff of the hospital, I need scarcely say that the physicians and surgeons at Guy's do not desire to be surrounded by female characters of such bad repute that the doctors' evil deeds within the hospital shall not be credited when spoken of abroad by foul women—such is Miss Lonsdale's astounding assertion! On the contrary, not only have we always had ladies as sisters at Guy's, and women of good repute as nurses, but the medical officers gladly hail any superiority that their female helpers show. Only they must keep their eyes open to the risks of seeing a great and free institution fall under the domination of any religious organisation, with which risk Miss Lonsdale's expression, *sisters in the proper sense of the term*, has a notable connection. But the relations of religious organisation to public opinion will have to very much change before a charity which, like Guy's Hospital, is the common property of the sick of every denomination, can be made by any authority the exercising ground for sisters in the proper sense of the term, or indeed for any other embodiment of religious exclusiveness and intolerance. And the medical officers of the hospital who resist, and will resist, a movement set on foot with such a purpose, are in no fear through the terrible threat embodied in Miss Lonsdale's elegant prophecy that we shall be "swamped." Only we hope the attempt will not be made with a deluge of lady pupils, forcing upon us an unwelcome variety of the influence of refined and intelligent women.

W. MOXON.