

same breath confess that the Nurses are not allowed to leave the Ward at ten o'clock, "unless by special permission." They admit that it is a "hardship" that when a woman has been at work all day, she should be called from her bed to work all night. They feel it is another "hardship," when a Night Nurse goes to bed at twelve, is called at three to attend a lecture, and is then sent fasting to bed again—to digest her instruction. But they consider the hardships unusual, whereas they are proved to be of frequent occurrence.

The Resident Doctors issue a table, showing how certain Nurses were worked. One was kept on duty for twenty and a-half hours without a break; another for twenty-six hours, with three hours' rest; another twenty-seven and a-half hours, with three and a-quarter hours' sleep; another twenty-seven and a-half hours, with two and a-half hours off duty; another thirty-six and a-half hours, with seven and a-half hours' rest; and another thirty-seven hours, with eight hours' rest. But these the Committee consider to be cases of irregular, rather than excessive, hours on duty!

We are glad to observe that our suggestion of a Nursing Committee has been adopted, and that the Committee recommend the appointment of this body to supervise the Department, and to which the Nurses can directly communicate any complaints which they may wish to make. The Committee propose to grant a monthly holiday, but decline to extend the summer holiday. But things are moving on. A good deal has been done already, and with patient persistence the rest will be accomplished, because public opinion is unmistakably on the Nurses' side.

A STUDENTS' STRIKE.

THE privilege of striking—striking promptly and inconveniently—to secure anything they desire, is now, in this latter half of the nineteenth century, fully recognised as the legitimate method by which the working classes bring their grievances to the notice of a sympathetic public. But until now the liberal professions have not resorted to strikes to secure privileges or avenge supposed wrongs. The medical students of Paris bid fair to set the example. One of the dressers of the Hospital Lariboisiere was in the habit of discoursing sweet music on the French horn in the silent hours of night, in the Hospital, within earshot of the Wards, to the distress of the inmates. As—in spite of all warnings and remonstrance—he persisted in this systematic annoyance of patients and

officials, he was "suspended from duty," but so wrath thereat were his fellow students that they threatened to strike *en masse*, and lay aside the apron—the French dresser's badge of office—unless their comrade were re-installed and, presumably, once more allowed to cultivate his musical tastes. Next time the Nurses of that Hospital are aggrieved by having any of their wishes checked or thwarted, will they discard their caps and aprons and refuse to attend on doctors and patients until their wrongs have been redressed? They have, anyhow, a brilliant example of insubordination to follow. The French papers, however, euphemistically call it a "little family quarrel."

POISONING PAUPERS.

IN the good old days, poison was a common weapon of state-craft and high life. If you were in good society, and wished to remove your rival in a gentlemanly and unostentatious manner, you had only to pay a visit, with a well-filled purse, to one of those alchemists, who, under the cover of a pretended search for the philosopher's stone, the elixir of life, or some such trifle, carried on a secret trade in poisons that enabled one

"To carry pure death in an ear-ring, a casket,
A signet, a fan mount, a filigree basket."

It was quite correct, and in keeping with the age. But, in this present era, poisons—used as drugs—are common, and within the reach of all. Cheap death, guarded by slippery Acts of Parliament, can be bought by the poorest, and the most deadly drugs are frequently used in medicines, whose preparation is now a special, and should be a most carefully supervised, branch of the healing art. When, therefore, the public hears that a woman in an Infirmary has been poisoned by the bottle of medicine that was intended to benefit her, a very thorough revision is likely to be required of arrangements that permit of such gross carelessness in matters that deal with life and death. An inquest has been lately held at the Shoreditch Infirmary on the body of a woman, who died in consequence of such a mistake having been made, aconite being substituted for nux vomica. As to the precise manner in which the aconite got into the bottle, the evidence threw little light; but some curious points were elicited respecting the management of the Dispensary. The corner where the poisons are kept is described as being very dark, and a pauper inmate of the Infirmary is told off to assist the Dispenser in his work, which is "very heavy." The man appointed had formerly been a shirt and collar dresser—a calling which, we imagine, is not the most usual preliminary training for a druggist's assistant—and he could not see to read the labels on the bottles unless he had his spectacles on, and turned to the light. There is no reason to suppose the poor fellow was not as careful as he could be; but the fact remains, that he was totally ignorant of the deadly nature of the drugs he assisted to mix, and was consequently a most unsuitable person to be entrusted with the casual retail distribution of poisons to the paupers of Shoreditch.

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