

Nursing Echoes.

* * All communications must be duly authenticated with name and address, not for publication, but as evidence of good faith, and should be addressed to the Editor, 20, Upper Wimpole Street, W.



IN another column we refer to the trouble which has recently arisen at St. Olave's Infirmary. The *South London Press* gives the following account:—

“The new St. Olave's Board of Guardians since their election last December do not seem to have got on very well with the Matron of Rotherhithe Infirmary, Miss Evans. At the Board meeting a fortnight ago, a letter was handed to the chairman and

read by the clerk, from which it appeared that the Matron objected to the appointment of a Probationer Nurse who had been elected by the Infirmary Committee at its previous meeting, and asked the Board to override the unanimous vote of the Committee (which included Dr. Perry, the medical superintendent of Guy's Hospital).

To the Chairman and Members of St. Olave's Board of Guardians.

GENTLEMEN,—I am sorry that I did not know that M. H., one of the servants of this Institution, had applied to the committee for the post of Probationer Nurse. In my opinion she is a very unsuitable candidate. I have known her for the past three years, and have not found her very satisfactory; and the fact that she has been a servant here will render it injudicious for her to be promoted in this Institution. This I explained to her some weeks ago, and told her it would be wiser of her to apply elsewhere. I shall, therefore, feel glad if the Board will not confirm her appointment, as it will not add to the harmony of the Nursing department or to the welfare of this Institution.

I am, &c.,

MARION M. EVANS, Matron.

When this letter had been read, the greatest indignation was expressed. The Rev. Father Buckley characterised it as most disgraceful, while Mr. Ecroyd said it was the most impudent thing he had ever heard of. Eventually the clerk was instructed to send the Matron a strong letter in reply.

At Thursday evening's meeting of the St. Olave's Board of Guardians, Mr. E. Pitts Fenton (the clerk) reported that he had accordingly written the following letter to Miss Evans.

MADAM,—I am directed by the Guardians to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 29th inst., addressed to the chairman and members of the Board of Guardians with reference to the recommendation of the Visiting Committee of the Infirmary to appoint M. H. as a Probationer Nurse at the Infirmary.

In reply, I am directed, firstly, to express to you the strong disapproval of the Guardians at the course you have seen fit to take in respect of the recommendation in question; secondly, that in their opinion your action

in writing a letter framed in such terms and expressing such opinions was most injudicious and unwarranted; thirdly, I am to point out to you that the appointment of the officers and servants of the Infirmary is a question entirely in the hands of the Guardians, who cannot allow their decisions and recommendations in regard thereto to be questioned in any way by you; fourthly, that it is entirely outside your province to dictate to the Guardians, but to obey their orders and carry out their instructions; fifthly, that should you address the Board in similar terms on any future occasion, they will have to consider your position at the Infirmary and the terms and conditions of your appointment.

I am, &c.,

E. PITTS FENTON, Clerk.

The Infirmary Committee reported that at their last meeting the clerk read a letter signed by twenty-four Nurses at the Infirmary with reference to the appointment of the Probationer Nurse in question. The Committee resolved that as the engagement of Probationers was a matter for the decision of the Board, the Nurses signing the petition be informed that the Committee declined to consider the communication from them on the subject.

The Rev. J. Scott Lidgett moved the adoption of the Committee's report.

Mr. Ecroyd: I should like to ask whether the Nurses have been informed of this decision, and, if so, how?

The Clerk (Mr. E. Pitts Fenton): I wrote direct to one of the Charge Nurses who signed the letter, but the document was addressed to the twenty-four Nurses.

Mr. Ecroyd: What was the name of the Charge Nurse you addressed the letter to?

The Clerk: Nurse Bell.

Mr. Ecroyd said the reason he asked this was because he had noticed that a large number of the signatories were those of young Probationer Nurses who had only been in the Institution a month or two. It appeared that one or two of the Charge Nurses took it upon themselves to object to Miss Helden being appointed, and got the young Probationers to sign the letter. These young girls had expressed their regret, and said they would not have thought of signing the letter if they had known what it meant.

The Chairman said he had never known such a circumstance to happen before in the whole course of his connection with the Board. It was not for the officers to say who should be appointed, and in his opinion the conduct of the Nurses in question looked like gross insubordination. He suggested that the Committee should be asked to reconsider the matter, and endeavour to discover the ringleaders.

The Rev. J. Scott Lidgett deprecated any further action by the committee, and suggested that the matter should be allowed to drop.

Mr. Bisley thought it was quite time that this insubordination should be repressed, and moved a resolution in accordance with the chairman's suggestion.

Mr. Widdows seconded.

Mr. Ecroyd: At the last meeting we had a letter from the Matron of the Infirmary with reference to

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