

"As my name has been mentioned, approvingly and otherwise, in connection with my vote for a third Nurse for the Union, will you kindly allow me space to say that I should have heartily supported the proposal for one who had received a Hospital training if she could have taken the position to which her training would have entitled her. But when it was decided to offer her a *lower* salary than the present Nurses, and so place her in a *third-rate* position, I felt sure that the outcome of such an arrangement could be nothing but difficulty, and would be productive of anything but comfort to the sick inmates.

CHARLOTTE E. BOUSFIELD."

We hope Mrs. Bousfield will support the right of the patients to have a thoroughly trained Nurse, and the right of a qualified Nurse to take her proper official position. To appoint an unqualified woman on the plea that "things would be more comfortable" is to barter away the safety and health of the patients. The untrained Nurses at present in possession of the field will have to recognise that they are *not* equal in knowledge to a trained Nurse. If they do not care to accept the inevitable the whole staff must be replaced by equally trained women. There is no middle course in a matter of this kind.

We are requested to call attention to the fact that an "Echo" in last week's issue about the Bedford Infirmary, refers to the Workhouse Infirmary. We do not think any confusion can have arisen on the subject, as our note dealt with the Board of Guardians, and reference was made to pauper inmates. But a correspondent hopes that we will explain that we referred to the Union, and not to the General, Infirmary.

At a recent meeting of the Worcester Board of Guardians, the following letter was read from Nurse Doran, who said:—

"During my time on duty I have had at different times a great many lunatics left in my charge. These, as you are aware, are much worse in the night than in the daytime. An able-bodied man from the House, knowing nothing of the management of the insane, is allowed me to sit up with a particular lunatic. Having sometimes other very serious cases to look after, or a patient dying, to say nothing of my two hourly visits to each ward, male and female, I cannot stay all the night with one individual patient. Yet should that lunatic be roughly handled, or in any way ill-treated, I, as the Nurse in charge, am held responsible. Should I require assistance of any kind, or if I want the doctor sent for, as sometimes happens, I am obliged to leave the Infirmary at any hour, go right to the front of the house, and am often a considerable time before I can make myself heard, because I have no other means of communication.

In the meantime, during my absence, my patient may die, or the lunatic injure himself or the sitter-up. At the present time I have two or three patients who are constantly falling out of bed, half imbecile and paralysed. They require constant attention, so how can I be responsible for them all? In a postscript the Nurse said that she had sent a copy of her letter to the Local Government Board, because, as she put it, 'as a trained Nurse, I am obliged to defend myself.'"

The Chairman said the committee thought it would have been more courteous on the part of the Nurse if she had given them an opportunity of considering her complaint before writing to the Local Government Board. She was told so, and she said that she meant no discourtesy to the Board of Guardians. Under the circumstances, the Chairman thought that as the Nurse dealt with lunatics and people who were frequently dying, she should have some means of communication with the master, and also that there should be a telephone from the master's house to the porter's lodge. He was sure that they would not wish their Nurse to go away from any patient who was in the last agony of death, or to jeopardise her life by being alone with a lunatic. This matter was brought before the Board some time ago, but it was not then carried. Now he hoped they would be able to support the Nurse's application.

We are of opinion that Nurse Doran has adopted a most wise course in repudiating responsibility for events which she could not possibly prevent. The telephone was agreed to. But it would seem desirable, in addition, to increase the Nursing staff.

The effect of the new order of the Local Government Board in Ireland is, that members of religious orders seeking the office of Nurse in Union Workhouses must be appointed individually, the same as in the case of any other officer. Hitherto it has been the rule to give the appointment to the community, whose Rev. Mother selected the ladies to discharge the duties.

So that the qualifications and training of these "Nun Nurses" will be examined and judged upon as if they were lay Nurses. The effect of this rule in the Irish Infirmarys will be most beneficent.

To anyone with a sense of humour, a position on an Irish Board of Guardians would be much coveted. There is more wit and fun in a short account of a Board meeting in the "distressful country" than could be found in any number of *Punch*. The love of argument and the appeals for anyone and everyone to "tread on the tails

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