

lecture at Torquay, on the 10th inst., "the article entitled 'Nurses à la Mode,' which Mrs. Goslett's friend, Lady Priestley, has contributed to last month's *Nineteenth Century*." Trained nurses are inclined, and with justice, to class those who lecture on nursing without practical experience in a hospital ward, as one class of Nurses à la Mode, whose ignorance of their subject brings contempt and discredit upon nursing as a profession.

At a recent meeting of contributors to the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary to receive the annual report of the managers, a very important alteration was made in the regulations for nurses. At present the Lady Superintendent has power to dismiss nurses with the sanction of the General Superintendent, but a proposal that the nurses should have an appeal to the Managers has been confirmed. This is only just, and we have always deprecated absolute power of one official over subordinates. The Matron should have power of suspension. She should then report her reasons, if she is compelled to use this power, to the Committee, but the right of dismissal should always remain in the hands of the Committee. There are now two ladies on the Board of Management of the Edinburgh Infirmary, Miss Louisa Stevenson, who has served over a year, and Mrs. Marcus Dodd, who has been recently elected.

A BRISK correspondence has been lately taking place concerning Nursing Economics in the *Irish Times*. "A Sympathiser" writes that although the fee for a trained nurse in public is one guinea a week, "that the nurses as a rule receive salaries from £14 to £25 per annum, the balance going to whatever institution the nurses are connected with." We are aware that in the "distressful country" the price of a trained nurse's services is a guinea a week, but we cannot believe that £14 a year is the remuneration accepted by trained nurses, and at a time when many Irish infirmaries are offering double the salary for trained nurses, who are most urgently needed to care for the helpless poor.

The Hon. Sec. of the Workhouse Medical Officers' Association writes in this connection in the *Irish press*:

"There are, however, some grave difficulties in the way of the employment of trained nurses in our workhouse hospitals. One of these is the general absence of suitable appliances. Placing a properly trained nurse in charge of an hospital where the only appliances are the patients and the straw bags they lie on, is like giving a cabinet-maker a saw and a hatchet and sending him into a forest with orders to construct a suite of furniture. Before we can utilise fully our trained nurses we want proper hospital furniture, hot and cold water laid on, baths, closets, iron

and wire beds, &c., &c., most of which necessities are still lacking in whole or in part in workhouse hospitals.

But one of the chief difficulties is the impossibility of obtaining the services of competent nurses for union work at any price. In one union, Balieboro', the guardians have been advertising for months for a trained nurse at a salary of £30 a year and rations, and there have been no applicants. The reason is that the nurse is not a recognised officer of the house. She is only spoken of as an assistant to the matron, and there is nothing to prevent the matron from interfering with her in the management of the hospital if disposed to do so. Well qualified nurses will not accept office under such conditions, and it involves the payment of higher salaries to nurses to induce them to accept the posts at all, than would be required were they placed on a proper footing.

This the Local Government Board could do by a stroke of the pen, and without, so far as I can see, involving any radical change in the system of workhouse administration. The duties of workhouse nurses, if uninteresting and often irksome, are not very arduous, and there are plenty of nurses now serving elsewhere at smaller salaries who would gladly take union appointments were the conditions of their service free from vexatious interference."

A MEETING was recently held at Hobart to consider the desirability of establishing district nurses in that town. A previous attempt to care for the sick poor has been made on somewhat novel lines by the members of the Young Women's Christian Association, some of whom in 1892 organised themselves into a "Nursing Band," numbering fourteen in all. These ladies agreed to undertake cases needing nursing when required to do so by the Committee. The scheme, however, fell through, as, with the exception of one or two members, "it was found impossible to induce them to work regularly, and the Committee, having received eighteen refusals to undertake the very work for which the Band was formed, considered their position absurd and tendered their resignation to the Y.W.C.A." Three of the members, however, carried on the work, and, being convinced of its necessity, they are now appealing to the public to help them to obtain properly-qualified district nurses. While we accord to the Nursing Band every credit for their desire to assist their sick neighbours, we are not surprised that their effort has not proved a success, for nursing, when efficiently done, is all engrossing, and cannot be adequately undertaken by those whose "other duties interfere with their nursing work," and further, district nursing should only, in our opinion, be attempted by thoroughly-qualified nurses. We congratulate the Nursing Band that their efforts for the good of their neighbours have resulted in the organisation of an association of district nurses on a sound professional basis.

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