

Presumably no answer has been sent to this gentleman, but the following are the comments reported to have been made at the meeting of the Guardians at which the letter was read:—

Mr. Philip Jenkins: The sisters are members of a secret society.

Mr. David Jenkins moved "that the letter be allowed to lie on the table for an indefinite period—say, until the priests got married (laughter).

Mr. Johnson seconded the amendment, which was carried.

It is to be hoped that a report of the meeting may be laid before the Local Government Board, as it cannot be supposed that this body will uphold the Guardians in answering a courteous letter with insults. If we might venture to make a suggestion, it would be that these Guardians, who have shown so little sense of the obligations entailed upon them by their responsible position, should be replaced by others for an indefinite period—say, until they have learnt to behave as gentlemen.

We should advise our readers to read "A Reply to Lady Priestley," by Miss Lillie Waddington, which appears in last week's *Woman's Signal*. It is straight to the point, and convincing.

We are glad to observe that Miss Ada Jennings, the Superintendent of the Torquay Nurses' Institute, has sent a most excellent reply to the *Torquay Directory* to Mrs. Clare Goslett's most ignorant criticism of nurses and nursing. It is quite time lecturing *à la mode*, such as, for instance, women with no practical training presuming to *teach* nursing, was exposed and prevented. We are gathering some interesting statistics upon the subject, which we hope to publish shortly.

THE letter in a recent issue on the "Treatment of the Dead," from M. A., has called forth the following remarks. One correspondent says:—

"The letter of your correspondent upon 'The Treatment of the Dead' is an interesting one, if only because it draws attention to a subject which is entitled to more consideration than it receives, but some of its statements appear to me to be open to comment.

(1) M. A. says that 'the apparently dead person is stripped and exposed.' This is, one must hope and believe, an exception and not the rule. In my own experience, at all events, which is somewhat a wide one, I have always known the dead washed, as the living are, under a suitable covering.

(2) The dead person is 'perhaps put on ice if he happens to be a Christian.' It would be interesting to know if there are any nurses whose practical experience endorses this custom.

(3) 'A person has hardly drawn what is believed to be his last breath, when the medical fraternity, like a crowd of vultures, fall upon the apparently dead

body, and slash it to pieces for the noble object of gratifying their scientific curiosity.' My own experience is that after death has taken place, and the body has been composed, at least two hours is allowed to elapse before the last necessary offices are performed, so that if the case be a hospital one, at least four hours must have passed before the body is removed to the mortuary, and if the death take place in a private house, surely the feelings of the relations, if not the good taste of the medical men, in which, in these matters, one has every reason to believe, would prevent such butchery taking place. I am only aware of one case in which an operation is performed upon a body so recently dead, namely that of Cæsarian Section, and then the operation is done to save life, and not to gratify scientific curiosity.

It would be very interesting if M. A. would give your readers his authority for saying that 'in cases of violent death . . . the soul remains very long in the body.' Is this a theological, or a scientific truth, if truth it be? It is quite a novel one to me."

"A Lover of Reverence" writes:—

"I am very glad that the treatment of the dead is being ventilated in the *NURSING RECORD*, but surely trained nurses do not treat the dead in the manner described by your correspondent last week. My own custom is, after having removed all unnecessary pillows, water cushions, &c., and having straightened the body (crossing the hands on the breast), to cover it with a sheet. Then after two hours have elapsed, I proceed, with other help, to wash it. I believe it to be a practice with many nurses, and certainly it is a very helpful one, to use some form of prayer before beginning to do this. That given in a little book entitled 'Servants of the Sick,' published by Masters, New Bond Street, together with an Our Father, and the clause from the Creed 'I believe in the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come' is perhaps as suitable as any. I then wash the body, under the sheet, in precisely the same way as one washes an helpless patient, and after putting on a shroud, or nightdress, or whatever garment the body is to be buried in (in the case of a priest, or bishop, this should be a cassock or vestments), I place a cross or crucifix in the hands if I think the person would have wished it, and flowers on the breast and about the bed. The bed is made up precisely as if the person were alive, except that the top covering consists of a single sheet or washing pall. I think that one would probably find upon inquiry that most nurses follow a rule somewhat of this sort. I should not have thought it necessary to give it, but that your correspondent, M. A., pictures such a very terrible state of things."

WE notice with much regret the sad and sudden death of Rev. Josias Grant Mills, chaplain of St. Thomas' Hospital. Mr. Mills, after taking the usual services at St. Thomas' on Sunday, 14th inst., left town for Eastbourne on Monday. On Wednesday morning he telegraphed to his wife "Home late to-night. Off to Beachy Head." He failed to return home, however, and subsequently his body was found under Seaford cliff. His death was caused by a fractured skull, the result of a fall over the cliffs.

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