

official had recently "adversely criticised the present nursing arrangements." Under the circumstances we are not surprised!

YET another Guardian figures as objector to the humane decree of the Local Government Board. Mr. Challingsworth, of the Dudley Board of Guardians, thought that his Board should "strenuously oppose" the new order.

MISS PHILLIPPA HICKS was on Tuesday last presented with a silver tea service by the members of the Nurses' Co-operation.

MISS S. A. WARBURTON, who has recently been appointed lady superintendent of the North Staffordshire Infirmary, has been presented by the nursing staff of the City of London Infirmary with a silver cake basket, in token of their goodwill and esteem.

WE have previously expressed our opinion, with regard to nursing matters at the Bradford Workhouse Infirmary, that the lady superintendent of the nurses, Miss Smith, was fulfilling her duties in a position of exceptional difficulty, a fact which recent events have, we think, proved.

At a meeting of the Board of Guardians the troubles in the Infirmary were discussed, and the minutes of a special meeting of the Infirmary Committee were read. The Board had received a memorial, signed by ten probationer nurses, complaining of "unkindness and injustice" on the part of an official, the official being the lady superintendent. The following account of the decision of the Infirmary Committee, to which, apparently, the matter was referred, is given by a contemporary:—

"Ultimately the Chairman had been instructed by the Committee to inform Miss Smith that she might have been unduly harsh, and to express the hope that in the future her manner might be more conciliatory. On the other hand, the Chairman, on behalf of the Committee, had informed the probationer nurses that, as they had made no previous complaint, it was not respectful to address the Guardians in that manner. Further, the Guardians objected strongly to a combination of officers or nurses trying to get rid of any officer, and the Guardians would not be dictated to by the nurses as to how the Hospital should be managed. He had asked the nurses to go back to their wards, and to endeavour in the future to work more amicably together."

The adoption of this report was moved and seconded.

Mr. Duggan moved as an amendment that only the first part of the minutes, which related to the lady superintendent, should be adopted, and was of opinion that the nurses could not logically be censured for daring to combine. The amendment was not seconded.

The Chairman (Mr. Guy) disclaimed objecting to legitimate combination amongst the nurses, and stated that what the Guardians did object to was a combination to get rid of any officer. He went on to say:

"As to the memorial, he (the Chairman) maintained that it was a disrespectful one to address to the Board when no complaint had previously been addressed to the Chairman or Vice-chairman of the Infirmary Committee. It asked 'How much longer are we probationers and nurses of this Institution to exist in a state of tyranny?' The lady superintendent was not allowed to be present when the nurses were giving evidence before the Committee, in order that they might speak the more freely, but the evidence as to specific acts of unkindness was very vague, and some of the nurses said that they had nothing to complain of, and had merely signed the memorial so as to be loyal to the others. The lady superintendent, since she was appointed, had been irritated and opposed and had been subjected to annoyance, and there had been a plot to obtain her dismissal. It was no wonder if, suffering and smarting under that kind of thing, she had at times spoken harshly to the nurses. On the other hand, the nurses had been told, not only in the Board-room, but by officials of the Union, that they were suffering under a tyranny. They had been instigated to complain for months past, and that was the cause of the present state of things."

After reading these remarks of the Chairman we think that no one will venture to hold that the position of the lady superintendent has been an easy or enviable one, and many will congratulate her that the "plot to obtain her dismissal" has proved futile. The attitude of those nurses who complained of "unkindness and injustice," and when asked for evidence as to specific acts of unkindness said they had "nothing to complain of, and had merely signed the memorial so as to be loyal to the others," is scarcely a creditable one. Loyalty to truth and justice should we imagine have been their first consideration!

It was stated at a recent meeting of the Stratford-on-Avon Board of Guardians that "the demand for suitable trained nurses is much in excess of the supply." The Board is at present in difficulties, as it advertised for a nurse for the infirmary, and only received three answers. Of the three candidates one was considered unsuitable; one had obtained another appointment when asked to appear before the Board, and the third declined to attend. The present nurse cannot stay on, as she has to fulfil an engagement to take another appointment, so the Board is driven to appoint "temporary assistance from the town," presumably of an untrained description. As the Board offers a salary of £32 per annum, which is stated to be £5 above the average, it seems hard that it

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)