

persons of good education and social position to become nurses, and by the rigid exclusion of all who are not of the highest character. The result has been eminently successful. England can now boast that she possesses the best class of nurses to be found in the world for skill, conduct and character, and ladies of the best standing, including members of the aristocracy, are eager and proud to join it. But Mr. Horrocks and Dr. Metcalfe reck little of this. In the letter to the lay press in which they advertise their scheme, they announce a rival plan by which women might be supplied as nurses who have no training, no discipline, no knowledge, no character, if only they will pay the registration fee! No self-respecting trained nurse assuredly will degrade herself by appearing in such a register, along with the riff-raff for whom "there would be no guarantee of efficiency." No doubt Mrs. Gamp will be in the post of honour, and will hand in testimonials from the Rev. Mr. Stiggins and from Mrs. Brown, attesting that "they always found her sober and painstaking." No doubt the char-woman who nursed her neighbour through "the quinsies" will be registered, and any other industrious person who wishes, when out of a job in housework, to try her hand at nursing.

The scheme will, if ever carried out, undoubtedly offer a serious temptation to undervalue the merits of those trained nurses for whom a full guarantee can be given as to character, skill and conduct. Why pay for such a nurse when Mr. Horrocks and Dr. Metcalfe approve of the "thoroughly respectable" washerwoman being employed as nurse when trade is slack? The scheme is in fact a public advertisement that there are medical men (two) who consider the long experience and laborious years of training in nursing are needless, and that the "ladies" for whom "no guarantee" would be given are good enough. As a member of the Bradford Medico-Ethical Society, I wish to dissociate myself entirely from this scheme and to protest against its having ever been introduced into the agenda of the society, and also against the misuse of the name of the Society as a promoter of a most discreditable proceeding which is entirely foreign to its objects and aims. As a medical practitioner I regard the scheme as in every way objectionable, crude and imperfect in its inception, calculated to do vast injury in character, and certain to lead to dangerous results for patients if ever carried out.

Your obedient Servant,
THOS. WHITESIDE HIME.

Bradford, June 2nd.

A QUESTION FOR THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD.

The Infirmary, Green Bank, Plymouth.
28th May, 1900.

MADAM,—We note that a paragraph in the NURSING RECORD of May 26th draws attention to nursing difficulties at Plymouth Workhouse Infirmary.

At a meeting of the Plymouth Board of Guardians on May 22nd surprise was expressed at the number of resignations amongst the nursing staff, and some guardians professed ignorance as to the cause.

Will you, Madam, allow us to point out that the causes are well known, as will be seen by perusal of a letter which was sent to the Board by the whole nursing staff on the 23rd March, 1900, and to which no reply has been received.

We also wish it to be understood that provided we do our duty in a satisfactory manner our Medical Officer and Superintendent of Nurses would be quite willing to give testimonials, and under such circumstances we think the Board would do likewise.

Our Superintendent has always done her best to make us comfortable, but, as must be remembered the infirmary is not separate from the workhouse, which increases the difficulty of administration.

[SIGNED BY THE NURSING STAFF.—ED.]

Letter sent to the Plymouth Board of Guardians by the entire Nursing Staff.

[COPY.]

23rd March, 1900.

GENTLEMEN,—We, the undersigned Nurses, beg to request the attention of the Board of Guardians to the domestic and other arrangements affecting the Nursing Staff.

We feel, and many of us have felt for a long time since, that the accommodation for nurses is not at all what we should expect, and is very much worse than that of most Infirmarys.

Our complaints are:—

1st. That there is no sitting-room for nurses besides the dining-room, in which nine meals are served daily, and which consequently does not provide rest and quietness.

2nd. That the kitchen is too small and meals therefore unpunctual and not so well served as they should be. Nurses get all the smell of cooking, and conversation of the inmates.

3rd. That the dormitories are not comfortable. None of them except one have a fireplace, and the partition walls (of matchwood) are so thin that there is no privacy. The noise from the bed-liers' ward is constantly heard, and there are most offensive smells from the emptying of slops from this ward on the landing of our bedrooms.

4th. There is only one bath and one small w.c. for eleven nurses.

5th. The nurse's bedroom opposite the L.I. Ward is extremely noisy day and night owing to loud conversation, &c., of inmates.

6th. We are exposed to draughts and wet feet in the cold and badly drained yards between the blocks. One nurse has had a somewhat serious illness, and this, we feel convinced, is due to the exposure, other nurses often getting colds in consequence of frequent wetting.

7th. Outdoor Nurses have no accommodation in the House except for meals. No room for changing wet clothes and no privacy whatever. We feel we must ask the Guardians to find us proper accommodation in the Workhouse and not allow us to be exposed early morn and late at night to all weathers. We do not feel it right for us to have this lonely and wet exposure.

8th. The rooms occupied by the Superintendent are very noisy, owing to close proximity of Infirm Wards.

9th. Two of the out-door nurses have made a complaint about sleeping arrangements, and this we hope will be altered without delay.

We regret that we are forced to make a direct appeal to the Board, as we do not see that any practical interest is taken in our surroundings or that any steps are being taken to provide such accommodation for nurses as will enable them to have some privacy and rest when off duty.

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