

Victoria Jubilee Institute is, in our opinion, ill-advised in giving its sanction to the employment of half-trained women under the title of nurses. If they were called, and recognized, as Cottage Helps, the position would be different, but the Jubilee Institute should appreciate its duty to maintain the recognized standard of nursing, and its action from a professional point of view is, in relation to village nurses, distinctly mischievous. But then the standard of the Jubilee Institute itself leaves much to be desired.

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At a recent meeting of the Thornhill District Committee of Dumfriesshire County Council, the principal business considered was the question of the erection of a large infectious hospital for the whole district instead of two at different places. A letter was read from the Local Government Board condemning the change, and strongly objecting to the eccentric site and meagre bedroom accommodation for the administrative staff. The letter did not commend itself to the Committee, and they decided, notwithstanding, to proceed with the preparation of plans on the new lines. The Chairman declared that the Local Government Board had entirely changed its front in the matter. What will happen now?

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THE Colonial Secretary for New South Wales recently laid on the table of the House the Report of the Public Service Board respecting an enquiry held by it into certain charges made against the Matron of the Callan Park Hospital for the Insane, Miss M. A. Fairbairn. The charges were—(1) that Bessie Smith, a nurse, forcibly administered noxious ingredients to patients without the knowledge of the Medical Superintendent; (2) that Miss Fairbairn did not report the fact, and did not interfere with Bessie Smith, or reprimand her for what she did; (3) that Bessie Smith struck a patient on the face with a mug in the presence of the Matron, who did not interfere with, reprimand, or report the nurse; (4) that the Matron appropriated to her own use fuel and food intended for the patients and nurses; and (5) that the Matron was instrumental in securing the dismissal, by making false charges against her, of Nurse Annie Quilkey, who had reported the above matters to the Medical Superintendent, Dr. Blaxland.

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AFTER an extensive enquiry the Board found—(1) that Nurse Smith forcibly administered pepper, salt, and water to the patients without the knowledge of the Medical Superintendent; (2) that the Matron did report the matter to the Medical Superintendent, but in such a way as to

lead him to believe that there was a conspiracy on the part of the nurses to injure Nurse Smith; (3) that the Matron did not interfere with Nurse Smith when she struck a patient with a mug, or reprimand or report her; (4) that the charge against the Matron of appropriating to her own use fuel and food intended for the nurses and patients was proved; (5) that the Matron used her influence to get Nurse Quilkey dismissed, but that there was no proof that false charges had been made against her. The Board believed that no proper investigation had been made into Nurse Quilkey's case, and that the charge of impertinence made against her, even if proved, did not warrant the extreme penalty of dismissal.

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THE Board also recommended that Miss Fairbairn should not be continued in the position of Matron, but as she had done good work in the past she should be allowed to resign; that Nurse Bessie Smith should be removed from the institution; that the Chief Inspector of Public Accounts be authorised to investigate the work performed by Mr. Whiting, the officer in charge of Government stores, the inquiry having shown that extravagance has been going on for a considerable time without being detected by Mr. Whiting, who is held to have been "culpably negligent"; and finally, that, as an act of justice, Miss Annie Quilkey should be reinstated in one of the other asylums, that she should be paid any reasonable costs to which she may have been put, and that the Government should deal with her application for compensation for the time she has been out of employment.

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IN the course of its Report the Board further stated:—"The evidence leads us to the conclusion that there is some ground for the belief that female insane patients are sometimes treated with needless harshness, if not with positive cruelty. While a good Matron could do much to prevent this, more is required. We would advise that lady inspectors, empowered to visit the wards at any time, day or night, be appointed. The ladies employed under the Factories Act, or in the Charities Department, might be made use of for this purpose."

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MR. W. TALBOT, writing to the *Times of India*, comments on the excellent work done by the plague nurses in India. He says:—"The people most highly appreciate the attention and good nursing, and often will not take their food save from the Sisters' hands. But I was quite astounded to hear that these noble women receive the paltry sum of Rs. 175 per month, and feed and clothe themselves out of that. It is a crying

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