

nurse. Even so, the appointment is not ideal, as the Master's wife must naturally look after his house and bring up his children. These are duties which, as a rule, take up the greater part of a woman's time. The reasons for the appointment as workhouse Matron of an unmarried woman, or a "widow without encumbrances," is obvious: she will be able to give her whole time to the duties of her office.

Mrs. W. J. Stewart has taken a great interest in improving the nursing at the Darlington Workhouse, and it is satisfactory to note that the Local Government Board, at the instance of the inspector, Mr. Lowry, are asking that the increase of the nursing staff should be considered. The sooner the better we should think, as there are sixty-two cases to nurse during the day, attended by two nurses, and at night by one. These conditions must mean that some of the work falls in an indirect manner upon other members of the staff, and that the nurses do not get that leave from duty to which, in the interests of their health alone, they are entitled.

These are considerations which should have appealed to the members of the Workhouse Visiting Committee when they met to consider the official communication, but it is greatly to be regretted that they appear quite satisfied with their very inadequate supply of nurses, and that they cannot agree with the Local Government Board that there is any present necessity to increase the number of nurses. The next move in the cause of humanity remains with the L.G.B., and we hope they will be firm with the Darlington Guardians and prevent them overworking their nurses, and thus running the risk of neglecting the sick.

It is to be regretted that Dr. Yeoman, the medical officer to the Wirral Board of Guardians, has opposed Mrs. Hodgson in her desire to deal justly with the nursing staff, and that he has actually gone so far as to report to the Board that the present staff is quite adequate, and that there is no necessity for a night nurse. Why? We imagined, vainly no doubt, that the obsolete notion, founded on a false economic basis, that the sick require care only during the day, and that by some miraculous process unknown to science they need no attention at night, was exploded. Not so, it would seem, at the Wirral Workhouse. The poor old people are left to suffer and die alone at night, or in the charge of an untrained pauper, their last hours distracted by noisy demented men. We hope, however, that Mrs. Hodgson will continue to demand reform. She might, as a Guardian, sit up a night or two in the sick wards, and report the condition of affairs from personal observation. We doubt if Dr. Yeoman has formed his opinions after this practical test.

Advocating the benefits of the Royal National Pension Fund to the nursing staff of the Western Infirmary, Glasgow, Sir Henry Burdett stated "that it had been founded with the intention of making nursing a perfectly safe occupation for women, and of making those who joined it feel that they were independent. Every woman who joined the fund might feel perfectly safe, as far as the material side of her life was concerned, after she reached fifty. At that age it was intended she should receive a pension of £30 a year."

Now we all know that the majority of nurses who subscribe to this Life Assurance Society—which grants nothing a nurse has not paid for at the full market price—do so for a far less return than £30 a year at fifty. And even if this small sum is due to them at middle age, how can it be claimed for one moment that it will make them either "independent" or "perfectly safe"? Thirty pounds a year pans out at only 11s. 6½d. a week, and it is nonsense to imagine that a professional woman can do aught but starve on such a sum. We wonder how Sir Henry Burdett would like to look forward to a tired old age sustained on this pittance. It is an insult to the intelligence of working women to suggest that it is adequate to maintain them in "independence"—"Just enough to keep one out of a nice warm workhouse," as we heard a Sister once remark.

We hope the nursing staff of the Western Infirmary will not be compelled to join this high-sounding Fund, as are the nurses of some other hospitals. Perfect liberty should be left to all nurses to invest the money they earn as they choose. Any other course is treating them as irresponsible beings, and fatally undermines their sense of personal responsibility.

The "religious" war still resounds at Granard. The Guardians have passed a resolution refusing to carry out any improvements in the workhouse until justice has been done to the religious sisters. A trained nurse has, however, been appointed to the hospital. Argument with a body of men in such temper is not of much use, says the *British Medical Journal*, but of course it will be the duty of the Local Government Board to see that the necessary improvements are made, even at the cost of issuing a sealed order, or of relieving the Guardians of their functions altogether.

From Beyrout, in Syria, a correspondent writes:

"Such a sad funeral took place only a few days ago at Beyrout (Syria), of the pretty young Irish governess of an American missionary, whose wife and family had already gone up to the mountains for the summer.

"The governess was in a field with the children towards sunset, when suddenly she was stung in the ankle by a viper.

"The children ran down to the house and gave the

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