

of Nurses who came from first-class provincial hospitals, where the training was just as good as in the London general hospitals. The proportion of hospital-trained Nurses was thus considerably more than appeared from the figures given. Miss Stanley concluded by saying that the statement just made would satisfy neither the Matrons nor the Nurses.

AMENDMENTS.

Mr. John H. Lyle, Member for the City, then moved as an amendment, that the Petitions received should be sent to the General Purposes Committee—a Committee of the whole Board—which Committee, if necessary, representatives of the Matrons could be invited to attend. Many members knew nothing of the matter till they saw the reports in the Press. In regard to the Matrons in their own employ, if they could see them face to face and convince them that they had no grievance, things would be all right.

Professor W. R. Smith, who seconded, said that the Council of Matrons was a very important body, and it was proper that their communication should be referred to a Committee to consider, so that a suitable answer might be sent after due consideration. He did not think that the Members of the Board could agree to all the points embodied in the memorandum of the Chairman.

Mr. Scovell also referred to the Matrons as "a very important body of ladies, whose work is beyond all praise."

A Member emphasised the fact that the point really involved was security of tenure.

Ultimately Mr. Lyle added to his amendment that the Committee which considered the Petitions should subsequently report to the Board.

As Professor Smith did not agree to this, another seconder was found.

The amendment, on being put to the vote, was lost by 17 votes to 31.

Professor Smith then moved as an amendment that the letter from the Matrons' Council be referred to the General Purposes Committee for consideration, and with power to reply.

This was seconded by Mr. Harold Spender, and carried.

Professor Smith further moved that the same course be pursued in regard to the letter received from the M.A.B. Matrons, unless some modification of the Order were made.

Miss Inderwick moved that some modification of the Order be effected.

QUESTION TO BE FURTHER DISCUSSED.

Mr. Lyle then gave notice that he would move at the next meeting that the Resolution, as passed at the last meeting in reference to Standing Orders, be rescinded. He did this, he said, for the purpose of affording an opportunity for discussion and further consideration.

A DANGEROUS MASTER.

Mr. Eckroyd characterised the letter received from the Board's own Matrons (which we have printed above) as "disgraceful." It was, he said, "a senseless agitation on the part of hysterical women, who had nothing whatever to complain of."

FACTS, NOT FALLACIES.

However the question may be represented and the issues obscured, the Matrons' case stands thus: If the Local Government Board sanction is given to the proposed new Order, prepared and approved by the M.A.B. for submission to the above Board, at its meeting on October the 12th, future Matrons working under the Metropolitan Asylums Board will not rank as Principal Officers, as is the case with those who hold office at present, and they will have no security of tenure, as they will be appointed by the M.A.B. and can be discharged at a month's notice without the sanction of the Local Government Board. As Mr. Harold Spender pointed out in his letter to the Matrons' Council Meeting, "it is highly invidious to pick out the Matrons and to place them in a definitely subordinate position to the principal male officers," and it is a suggestion which, in the interests of efficiency in the nursing departments of Metropolitan Asylums Board Hospitals should be strenuously resisted.

It is significant of the attitude of mind of one member of the Board that he should publicly characterise the moderately-worded letter of its Matrons, presented in a perfectly constitutional manner, as "disgraceful," and a "senseless agitation on the part of hysterical women who have nothing whatever to complain of."

AN APPEAL TO CÆSAR.

With such an expression of opinion before it the Local Government Board will certainly be wise to retain the right to appoint and discharge the Matrons under the Metropolitan Asylums Board. Our advice to the Asylums Board Matrons, in the event of an unsatisfactory reply to their letter, is to exercise the right of "appeal to Cæsar," which they possess, and to go straight to the Local Government Board with the whole force of their nursing staffs behind them. We learn that the nurses in the great Fever Hospitals, and in the Poor-Law Infirmarys, who are all in the service of the Local Government Board, are unanimous in their condemnation of the proposal to deprive the heads of the Nursing Departments in Metropolitan Asylums Board Hospitals of their present status as Principal Officers. All these nurses have the interest of the sick at heart, and know well that such a policy would be fatal to good discipline and, in consequence, to good nursing.

Since the Chairman of the Metropolitan Asylums Board appears to have taken exception to the use of the word "degrade," as applied to the status of the Matrons, we draw attention to the meaning of the word given by a standard dictionary, which is "to reduce from a higher to a lower civil rank; to strip of office or honours, and so of civil rank."

We learn that the Resolutions sent out by the Matrons' Council for signature, and to be forwarded to the President of the Local Government Board, are being widely supported, the whole Nursing Staff, where the opportunity has been given them, signing to a woman.

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