

professional body which they represent in the press. We regret to feel it incumbent on us, under the circumstances, to remind our readers of the well-known fact that opinions expressed in the *British Medical Journal*, are by no means synonymous with the opinions of that large number of members of the British Medical Association, to whose energy and kindness trained Nurses are largely indebted for the incorporation of the R.B.N.A. by Royal Charter.

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THE spirited action of Dr. LOVELL DRAGE concerning the Nursing of the inmates of the Hatfield Union, of which he is the consulting medical officer, is worthy of wide publicity. Upon the death of the late Master of the Workhouse, Dr. LOVELL DRAGE suggested to the Guardians the necessity for a change of system, and the appointment of a trained Nurse as Matron to the Infirmary, which contains thirty-four beds, and is separate from the Workhouse; this was apparently agreed to, and a trained Nurse advertised for, and an excellently qualified member of the R.B.N.A. applied for the position. The Guardians, however, in spite of their advertisement, appointed a person as Matron without any training whatever, and Dr. DRAGE at once performed his public duty at the cost of personal comfort, and reported the matter to the Local Government Board. The advice given by Dr. DRAGE is that a competent trained Nurse be engaged, that she should be allowed one Nurse to work under her, and that she should be responsible to the medical officer for the care of the sick, and not to the untrained Matron—advice which it would be well to follow until such time as the Guardians of the poor at Hatfield recognise the vital importance of a trained and educated woman being placed at the head of their Workhouse. It is eminently unfair to place a professional Nurse, so far as her professional duties are concerned, under the direction of an untrained woman. In this connection we regret to note the frequency with which trained Nurses place themselves in an anomalous position by working in so-called Home Hospitals and Institutions, under the direction of unqualified persons; *this is distinctly unprofessional*, and can only be conducive to the disrepute of our profession.

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*Truth* says (and we heartily agree with the necessity of a Local Government Board inquiry) that:—

“A scandal similar to that at Lurgan, and equally grave, has just been brought to light in connection with the Wolverhampton Workhouse. It seems that at present there is only one trained Nurse to attend to 250 patients; and some of the evils which result from the lack of a proper staff were described by Dr. Totherick at the Meeting of the Guardians on Friday. Patients, he said, frequently failed to get their right food, and stimulants which were ordered for them were not given, but—so he suggested—sold. Medicines also

often found their way to entirely wrong patients, a bottle, ordered for one being frequently given to another. In such circumstances the doctor no doubt wisely prescribes only the most innocuous mixtures—especially as part of the dispensing is done by the labour-master. The Guardians have decided to appoint four Probationer Nurses. In view, however, of the foregoing, and the further serious allegations which were made as to the filthiness of some of the beds and the harsh treatment of sick and dying paupers, the matter ought not to be allowed to drop. It should be at once made the subject of a Local Government Board inquiry.”

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“Under pressure from the Local Government Board and a deputation of ratepayers, the Lurgan Guardians have at length dealt with the question of the Nursing arrangements in the Workhouse Infirmary, to which I alluded several weeks ago. Hitherto only two Nurses have been employed to attend to over 130 patients, and the poor people have been largely left to the tender mercies of pauper “orderlies” utterly unfitted for such duties. Certain Guardians—including, strange to say, a medical man—would evidently have preferred to maintain this state of things, but the majority recognised that something must be done to strengthen the staff. They determined, however, that that something should be as little as possible, and instead of engaging four Probationer Nurses, as they were urged to do, they resolved to engage but two.

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THE authorities of the Workhouse Infirmary at Birmingham are moving with the times, and ten more paid Probationers have been replaced by paying pupils, who pay £40 for two years' instruction—in the theory and practice of nursing. The Chairman, in moving the adoption of the minutes of the Infirmary Committee, lately remarked “that the reputation of the Workhouse Infirmary was so great that they could get as many of these learners as they wanted, and the new arrangement, while it would yield a considerable increased income to the Guardians, would be equally efficient with the present.”

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DURING the past week some of our contemporaries have been questioning the justice of the new regulations for Probationers at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, and the four years' curriculum is instanced as a very great hardship. This is a matter of opinion, and the answer of the authorities is obvious. No one need attempt to conform to them unless she chooses. But it appears that she does choose, for we hear from the Matron that she has never had so many applications for admission before; and the difficulty will not be to obtain candidates, but vacancies for them to fill. We have studied and printed the new regulations, and find them eminently just and conducive to thoroughness and discipline; and venture to hope that in the near future (say, when the new Home is in working order) that each Probationer will be called upon to pay for her nursing education, and thus be permitted to occupy the self-respecting and independent position of pupil, rather than that of servant. If our contemporaries would turn their attention

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