

professional training ; but we are looking forward to the time, which we believe is almost within sight, when every parish of any importance will have its distinct Infirmary, not, perhaps, on the same magnificent scale as those which have sprung up within recent years in the metropolis and large provincial towns, but, although on a smaller size, equally efficient as to its details and management. We are looking forward to a time, which appears to us to be rapidly coming, when the Poor Law Infirmarys of the Kingdom will take, to a large extent, the place in public estimation which is now held by our large general and special Hospitals ; and when the system which is becoming general on the Continent will be adopted in this country, of making the Poor Law Infirmarys available, by means of graduated charges, for those who are above the pauper class. We are looking forward to the time when each Poor Law Infirmary will have its regular visiting and consulting staff of eminent medical men, exactly as the voluntary Hospitals of to-day possess this invaluable aid. With these advances in popularity and efficiency, it is beyond dispute that these Infirmarys will become centres of Nursing work, and that the Training Schools attached to them will hold no inferior position in the educational system for Nurses.

The Chelsea and the Kensington Workhouse Infirmarys, so far as their external buildings and internal arrangements are concerned, are, we believe, but types of the Poor Law Infirmarys of the future, and it is a matter of common knowledge what reputation these Institutions have obtained in the Nursing world. If it be argued that in many smaller towns or country districts the parish would be unable to provide a Workhouse Infirmary of its own, we would reply that nothing could be easier, or, indeed, is more probable than that a number of parishes will combine to support a conjoint Infirmary precisely as the Metropolitan Asylums Board now maintains fever Hospitals to which the inhabitants of many parishes can be sent. There are even some who think that the days are approaching when no inconsiderable number of our general Hospitals will be taken over by the parochial authorities and, practically, be converted into Poor Law Infirmarys, in which case a speedy and easy solution would be found of the many difficulties which beset the finances of general Hospitals on the one hand, and the administration of Poor Law Infirmarys on the other. Whether this be so or not, the practical question for the moment remains, as to the best methods of improving the Nursing attendance upon sick paupers, and it appears to us that this can only be effected upon some such lines as those which we have now discussed.

INFIRMARY NURSING.

A very significant step has just been taken by the Wolverhampton Board of Guardians. The Infirmary under their control contains over 200 beds for sick paupers, and to attend upon this number there has hitherto been *one* Nurse. This state of affairs, the Guardians propose to remedy, by the magnificent addition of four Probationers to the nursing staff—a fact which proves that these gentlemen can have very little comprehension of the magnitude of the defects in their Infirmary, or of the only possible method of remedying them. Probationers, we may inform them, who will go for the salary which they offer, of £10 a year, are persons who require to be taught, not women who have acquired the knowledge necessary for the efficient care of the sick. The addition of four pupils, therefore, means, not that the sick in the Wolverhampton Infirmary will be any better attended and cared for, but that the one unhappy Nurse, in addition to being responsible for the care of 200 sick people, will now be further expected to teach four pupils their duties, and to watch them in order to prevent any serious, perhaps fatal, mistakes being caused by sheer ignorance on their part. This can be described by no other term than preposterous. If the Wolverhampton Guardians admit, as they certainly should do, and indeed, as they appear to have done, that the present provision for the care of sick paupers, under their management, is totally inadequate to the necessities of the case, the logical conclusion would have been that something adequate should have been done in the way of reform.

CONSIDERATE EMPLOYERS.

The following paragraph from Miss Collett's Official Report upon the employment of women, given in the Labour Commission Blue Book, is well worthy of disinterment. Referring to the employment of its women workers by the well-known Cocoa manufacturers, Messrs. Cadbury & Son, she reports :—“The girls change their boots if damp, and place them on racks in the cloak-rooms above hot-water pipes. For the sake of cleanliness they have to wear white holland dresses at their work, taken off before they go home, they are charged two-thirds of the cost of the holland; and make the dresses themselves. They must have a clean dress every Monday. A playground of about three-fourths of an acre is provided for the girls, shut in by trees, and with benches all round it, several of which are under cover. . . . The cloak-room is large and well fitted, and lukewarm water is laid on for washing. The dining-room is fitted with seats, with backs reversible into tables, and the room is frequently used as a lecture hall. . . . The factory is lighted with electric light. The ventilation is excellent, and the fresh air warmed by hot pipes as it comes in. . . . The women work entirely apart from the men, and are superintended by forewomen. It is the special business of a district Nurse to visit the girls who are ill, and a committee of forewomen meets once a week to give out tickets that may be required for Hospitals, &c. About 36 cottages, which might be described as semi-detached villas, with five rooms and a scullery and a good garden to each, are let at 5s. to 6s. a week.” It is a pleasure to find, on such indisputable evidence, that there are employers of female labour who are alive to the duty of providing for the health and comfort of those who are dependent upon them ; and the methods of Messrs. Cadbury & Son may well be commended to the notice of other firms who employ women workers.

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