

against the Hospitals as might appear. Under the present system of wholesale cooking it is well-nigh impossible to avoid these evils we have touched upon. But the remedy lies in the establishment in every training school of a diet-kitchen for "extras," where, under the superintendence of a properly qualified teacher instruction would be given to the Nurses in sick cookery, and the detail work, with the exception of the work of one kitchenmaid, should be performed by the Nurses—aye, even to the learning how to properly clean a saucepan!

Great developments would arise from the fact of educated and cultured minds being brought to bear upon Hospital diet. It surely is *not* necessary that rice and custard puddings should be the *pièce de résistance* of the daily dinner. The same amount of milk and the same number of eggs would furnish an infinite variety of puddings with which to stimulate a patient's appetite. Day after day the same puddings are served out and almost as much as is eaten remains on the plates. Day after day one sees, even in a children's ward, the almost nauseating effect of the perpetual rice and custard. And from the waste through so much being left on the plates, they are really very expensive puddings.

Take that same chicken, potato and vegetable prepared by a Nurse and contrast the result. We have had an extended experience of the United States diet-kitchens, where, if the chicken before being cooked were found to be a little tough, it would be gently parboiled and then roasted. It would be served then beautifully tender and tempting, with just a little bread-sauce, a nice mealy, or a mashed potato, the greens daintily picked and cooked to a turn. And it would cost the Hospital not a farthing more. The patient would enjoy it and eat every scrap, and thus nothing would be wasted or lost.

The perennial rice-pudding does not appear daily in America as it does with us. Great care is taken to vary the diet, and it would be considered bad Hospital house-keeping to furnish the patients with the same pudding at every dinner. With the infinite variety into which eggs and milk and different farinaceous foods can be shaped, there is no reason why sick people should have such monotonous food.

And we call to mind the apologetic way in which we used to take round the everlasting bread and butter, and how the really sick people craved "just a little bit of toast, Nurse," and how little time there was for us to make it, and how often it meant giving up for ourselves the

little interval of rest at tea-time! Now, there is no possible reason why those who are on special or extra diet, or whose appetites are poor should not have just "that little bit of toast" which constitutes for them, with their cup of tea, an ideal little meal. It is not good Nursing to give sick people rough food, and the next reform in Nursing points towards diet-kitchens, where good food will be well-cooked and temptingly prepared for the bedside.

THE question of the condition of Nursing in Irish Workhouse Infirmaries came up in the House of Commons, when—

Mr. M'Cartan asked the Chief Secretary for Ireland whether his attention had been called to a letter headed "Misery in Workhouses," signed by Sir Philip C. Smyly, M.D., chairman of the Irish Medical Association, with regard to the Nursing in Irish Workhouse Infirmaries: and whether he would consider the desirability of having a public inquiry into the condition, working, and general system of workhouses in Ireland.

Mr. J. Morley: The Local Government Board inform me that they do not consider that the letter fairly represents the actual condition of workhouses in Ireland. The statement that there are forty-three workhouses in which the Nursing is entirely in the hands of pauper women is, the Board points out, absolutely without foundation, as there is no workhouse infirmary which is not in charge of a responsible paid officer. There are 641 paid Nurses in the 159 unions in Ireland, who have no duties to perform other than the nursing of the sick.

Mr. T. W. Russell asked whether the attention of the right hon. gentleman had been directed to the recent inquiry, under the Local Government Board, into the case of the Athlone Workhouse, where the very worst system of Nursing was pursued, and the most serious results had accrued: and whether the right hon. gentleman would consider the appeal which had been made to him by the hon. member opposite, and would order some kind of public inquiry, either by Royal Commission or by a Departmental Committee, to investigate these matters independently altogether of the Local Government Board.

Mr. J. Morley said that his attention had been drawn to the state of things in the Athlone Workhouse. He had watched the state of things in the Irish Workhouses with much care since he had been in office, and he confessed that in some instances he had found grave reasons for dissatisfaction; but the Local Government Board were constantly drawing the attention of the Boards of Guardians to their duty in this respect, although it was not a very light matter to overrule the Boards of Guardians. He, however, could assure the hon. gentleman that the matter was engaging his serious attention. The subject called for revision, but what particular form that revision should take he could not say at present.

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