

IN commenting on the reluctance shown by the Board of Guardians to appoint a properly qualified night Nurse in the Infirmary, the *Coventry Times* very sensibly points out that it appears to be a too common practice for Boards of Guardians to wait till "something dreadful happens" before introducing common-sense reforms. It is so much easier to secure the stable before the horse is stolen, and it is hoped that Coventry will introduce, without delay, properly qualified Nursing into its wards. There is no reason why the poor in Infirmarys should not be on exactly the same footing as the patients in Hospitals.

It is indisputable that there are, at present, a large number of scarlet fever cases to be dealt with in the metropolis. But nothing can excuse the condition of things which was revealed on Monday at an inquest at the Mile-end Vestry Hall respecting the death of Maud Lillian De Rose, aged 2, the daughter of a fish porter, lately residing at 3, Richardson Street, Mile-end.

It appears from the statements of the father that on September 5th, one of his children was taken ill, so they took it to the London Hospital, where it was certified to be suffering from scarlet fever, and at once removed to the Homerton Fever Hospital. The next day two of the other children developed the same symptoms, so they took them also to the London Hospital.

The Coroner: But the London Hospital is not a fever hospital. There are 900 patients there, and yet you take these fever-stricken children into their midst. How did you take them?—Witness: My wife took them. They walked.

The Coroner: Well, it may be your ignorance, but a more likely way to spread disease could hardly be devised.

Three days later deceased caught the disease, and was taken to the London Hospital. About three o'clock the following morning the child was sent home to his house in the fever-van, and he was informed that there was no vacant bed, and the child must remain at home till one was found for it.

No explanation is forthcoming as to why the van was sent at all, as a list of all the vacant beds is supposed to be kept at the ambulance office.

Dr. Keen, the medical officer, said many such cases came under his notice. It was a common occurrence for them to be left six or seven days.

The Coroner, Mr. Baxter, remarked that "this was a free and easy way" of managing things, in which we quite agree. The enormity of the case is enhanced by the fact that red tapeism demands when a patient is returned in this way owing to "no beds," that the parents have to make a fresh application for removal, and so on, for an indefinite number of times till a bed falls vacant.

We remember the criticisms offered by the London press as to the want of accommodation and inadequate means of conveyance of patients to the Hospitals during the cholera at Hamburg. And we assert from personal knowledge that after the first few days' panic no such flagrant case as the above occurred, in spite of the overwhelming nature of the epidemic.

A LETTER in Wednesday's *Times* from Mr. John Mallett, Assistant Clerk to the Metropolitan Asylums Board says:—

"The managers are fully alive to the necessity of additional accommodation for infectious diseases, and are now, after experiencing enormous difficulties in obtaining suitable sites, providing three additional hospitals for fever and diphtheria cases, to accommodate in all nearly 1,600 patients, two of which hospitals are in course of erection."

THERE are a few surgeons in London who insist that only black pins shall be used in in surgical dressings, as they argue that they are not susceptible of rust, and that there is no danger of them being overlooked. Not long since a patient a few days after an operation noticed that black safety pins were being used in the securing of her dressing. "Oh!" she said, "it's a mercy I didn't die. It looks so ominous-like to see them funereal pins. If I'd 'a' known it I don't believe I'd 'a' got better."

THE Local Government Board has administered a sharp rebuke to the Athlone Board of Guardians for their action in disregarding the official order that a trained night Nurse should be appointed in place of an untrained nun. The Board has been dissolved, their duties being transferred to two paid Vice-Guardians. This will serve as an object lesson, not only to the Guardians of Ireland, but to all Guardians who, being entrusted with the health and lives of the people, fail to properly fulfil that trust. We shall expect to hear of the prompt appointment of many trained night Nurses in various Work-house Infirmarys.

- It seems a pity that the services of these devoted nuns should be lost to the poor, but upon the proposal that the nun in question should be trained in a Dublin Hospital, the Bishop refused to permit the arrangement, because it is against the rules of the order to undergo training in the manner required.

There are thus two courses open to "the Order." They must either alter their rules and make it "conform" that their Sisters receive *bonâ fide* and recognised training, or they must recede altogether from the care of the sick. No persons should be allowed "in the name of religion," to profess to do anything for which they are not qualified by training to do in the best possible manner.

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