

### City of London Infirmary.

ON the 12th inst., Mr. Downes, one of the Local Government Board Inspectors, opened an inquiry, at the City of London Union Infirmary, into the alleged mismanagement of this Institution.

Dr. Buncombe, the Medical Officer, stated that since his appointment differences had arisen between himself and the Matron in regard to the management of the Infirmary, one of his complaints being that the Matron refused to carry out his orders. He had on one occasion found a patient tied down in bed with a bandage round her chest, done by a new Nurse on probation. He considered the tying down of the patient was an honest blunder on the part of the Nurse. In cross-examination, Dr. Buncombe denied that he had ever favoured one Nurse more than another, but admitted that Nurse Moyes had been a domestic servant in his father's employment, and that he had promoted her to the office of Nurse. He was not cognisant of the fact that she used to leave the Infirmary at eight o'clock in the morning, and not return till ten at night. One of the Nurses was in the habit of coming into the dispensary and writing absurd notes, and conducting herself generally in a "silly" manner. He never wanted to hold the Matron up to ridicule. With reference to the charge made against him by the Matron as to his having interfered with matters outside his province, he had only examined the cupboards where the food was stored, water-closets, and bathrooms, for sanitary purposes.

Miss Warburton, the Matron, stated that she had thirty-nine Nurses, thirteen laundry-women, and twenty-six servants under her control. She had suggested to the Board of Guardians that an assistant-matron should be appointed, because there was more work than she could do. She had also asked for an additional night superintendent, but was told that these matters were included in the new scheme which the Guardians were preparing. The Nursing Staff was necessarily short-handed. Referring to the accusation of favouritism, she had never been accused of injustice until Dr. Buncombe told her that one of the Nurses had left because she considered herself badly treated. She had at once demanded that the Nurse in question should be brought before the Guardians to prove that statement. Dr. Buncombe had afterwards asked her to draw up a scheme of annual holidays for the Nurses, and this she had done with great care. She afterwards found that her scheme had been altered without her being consulted. On many occasions Nurses were censured by the Medical Officer without her knowledge, and to this she strongly objected. Nurses had left the Infirmary at frequent intervals, and she was informed that they had been told to conduct lunatics to the asylum, but many of them did not return until late at night, having been away all day.

It was incorrect that she left the Infirmary for several hours without the knowledge of the Medical Officer. She did not know that a patient had been tied down in bed until she read the report in the papers, the Medical Officer having written to the Board of Guardians without speaking to her on the subject. After informing the Medical Officer by note of her intended absence on the particular Sunday, she had left the floor in charge of a Nurse whom she considered to be thoroughly competent. There was a

Probationer in the particular ward in which that patient was lying, but this was absolutely necessary, owing to the fact that the staff was short-handed. There was only one relief Nurse, and that was not a sufficient number.

In reply to the charge that she had directed the night porter to make an incorrect entry in his book whereby Nurses were made to appear to return later than they really had done, the Matron stated that she visited the porter's lodge at night, and met Nurse Warren coming in at three minutes past ten. On asking the porter whether he entered the exact time of her arrival, he replied that he should "cut" the three minutes and made it ten o'clock. She then said that it was his duty to enter the exact time, and accordingly he altered it to 10.3. It was untrue that she had directed him to make it still later.

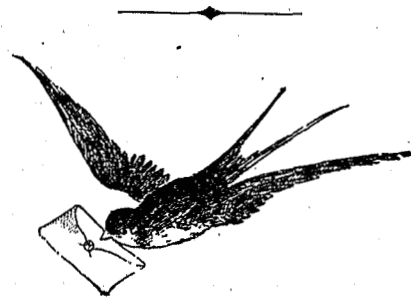
On resuming the case on the 18th inst., Nurse Francis deposed that the Medical Officer was continually rude to her, especially in the presence of patients. She resigned because one of the patients, who was an Italian, struck her in the face. In her opinion this patient was a lunatic, but Dr. Buncombe asserted that he was sane. A week or two later the man in question was certified to be a lunatic and removed to an asylum. The Medical Officer was always complaining about little things.

Mary Munday, formerly a Nurse, said she had heard Dr. Buncombe speak rudely to Nurse Francis on one occasion in the presence of the patients. She could not remember what Dr. Buncombe said. It was not exactly what he said but the nasty way he said it.

Charles Drake, the Steward, said the supervision of the food was taken over by the Matron when she came. In his opinion the cooking now was much better than in his time, the change from male to female cooks being a great improvement. He had found it easy to work with the Matron. Nurses Rankin and Francis had never taken tea on the lawn. They had tea in his room with his wife when off duty.

In the course of the inquiry other evidence of an unimportant nature was given, and the proceedings closed.

Dr. Downes's report will be issued in due course.



### Our Foreign Letter.

#### NURSING IN TASMANIA.

ON several occasions there have been letters in the RECORD, telling of Hospital and Nursing doings in Australia, but I think there has been little or nothing as to what we do in Tasmania. Perhaps I may remind my readers without offering indignity to their geogra-

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