

Surgeon M'Ardle, Dr. Jacob, Dr. Moorehead, Dr. Laffan, Mr. Henry G. Allen, Mr. Richard Bagwell, D.L., Mrs. Browne, Mrs. Lambert Butler, Mr. James D. Crosbie, Mr. Edmund Dease, D.L., Mr. John Dillon, Mr. Charles Eason, Mr. Nugent Everard, D.L., Mr. F. Roche Kelly, D.L., Mr. Hugh Law, Mrs. Charles Martin.

To complete the Committee, we should like to see upon it the names of some of our leading Irish Nurses. The practical knowledge of these ladies would, no doubt, add to the efficiency of the work of the Association.

We are glad to observe that letters have reached the *British Medical Journal* office "from various parts of the world, which indicate the need of some radical reforms in the matter of military Hospital equipment." It is time the medical department of the War Office threw off its proverbial lethargy and assumed a more progressive attitude. It would be well to begin with a thorough inspection of the somewhat congested pigeon-holes.

The London School of Medicine for Women has not been so fortunate in the way of legacies as its merits deserve. But it has just received a gift of £1,000 from a lady who recently was a student at some of the classes. The interest is to be devoted to the library and common-room funds and to bursaries.

Miss Charles, the earnest Hon. Sec. of the Santa Claus Society, sends the following note: "Will it be possible for you to correct a slight mistake in a recent note of yours regarding the Santa Claus Society. We did not *only* send gifts at Christmas to St. Bartholomew's Hospital, but we distributed or sent presents to 37 Hospitals and Infirmaries."

The Mayor of Newcastle, in speaking at a meeting in connection with the proposed Royal Victoria Hospital, which it is hoped to erect in the town in commemoration of the 60th year of the Queen's reign, and for which £39,000 has already been collected—said he thought "they might look for a great amount of help from the ladies, whose services they hoped, further on, to utilise in some form." We notice there is not one woman's name on the Committee, although several women have contributed generous sums to the Infirmary. We hope some of the ladies will insist on their "services being utilised" on the Committee, as we presume women patients will be received and treated in the Infirmary.

Mr. Thomas Bryant, F.R.C.S., has been appointed Surgeon Extraordinary to the Queen, in the place of the late Sir John Erichsen.

Mr. Hankin, in a recent paper in the *Indian Medical Gazette*, throws some light on the way in which cholera and other diseases are spread by the native, uninitiated as he is in the devious ways of Sanitation. He points out that in Agra, where a new and very complete system of surface drainage with flushing arrangements has been introduced, most of the cases of cholera which have occurred have taken place in the drained district. For the simple reason that "the inhabitants appreciate the drain so much that they use it for washing their teeth, and the children bathe in it!"

Poor Law Officers' Superannuation Act.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

MADAM,—From the letters and articles which have from time to time appeared in the Medical, Nursing and other journals, it is clear that an entire misconception exists as to the position of female Poor Law Officers, and especially Nurses, under the provisions of the "Poor Law Officers' Superannuation Act," resulting in the appearance of some extraordinary suggestions and misrepresentations.

With your assistance I will endeavour, as briefly and comprehensively as possible, to put before the female portion of the Poor Law Service exactly how they are affected by the Act.

The principal grievances set up on their behalf appear to be:—

1. "That they will be compelled to contribute out of their small pay towards a Superannuation which few of them can hope to attain, and so to swell the pensions of the higher at the expenses of the lower grades of the service."

2. "That as this class of officer cannot continue at work until the age fixed in the Act as the ground of retirement on account of 'old age,' they will have to cling to their duties long after they have ceased to be efficient in order to obtain their pensions."

3. "That the superior class of young women who have been entering for training as Nurses will be deterred by the deduction of a percentage of their pay from doing so in future, so that there will be a steady deterioration in the quality of Nursing."

To deal with the last grievance first. Nurses may indeed pray to be "saved from their friends," for I can conceive nothing more insulting to the educated and high-principled young ladies who are burning to enter the noble profession of Nursing, than to suggest that they are actuated by such mercenary motives as to say, "I am anxious to devote myself to the profession of Nursing, if the salary and emoluments during my Probation are worth £40 a year, but if they are only worth £39 I will have nothing to do with it."

This is what the argument really comes to, for a Probationer receiving an average of £15 a year during her period of probation, with board and lodging worth, say, £25, will have to pay 16s. a year towards a *certain* future Superannuation if she continues in the Poor Law Service and requires it when past her work. It should not be forgotten, too, that even if the Nurse or female servant leaves the service for marriage or any other reason, and in later years is compelled, through widowhood or any other cause, to re-enter it, the money she has paid has not been lost, for she will be entitled ultimately to reckon one sixtieth of her remuneration at the time of her retirement for every year of her earlier service.

But should the small deduction, unfortunately, be found to keep the better class of women from entering for training as Nurses, Boards of Guardians will have to offer an additional pound a year to the gross salary, in order to make the net salary equal to what it was before the deduction under the Superannuation Act, and to thus keep up the "quality of Nursing." For my own part I have too high an opinion of the class of women who have, of late, been entering the

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