

A Walk-Over.

"Come cat, and dog, and cow, and calf,
Come, every one of you, and laugh!"

"I SHOULD be glad to know if you have a vacancy, as I wish to be a matron," wrote an ingenuous applicant for the next vacant position as probationer in a Metropolitan Hospital. We were irresistibly reminded of this aspiring young person upon reading the remarkable letter addressed by Sir Henry Burdett to the *Lancet*, which is published in last week's issue of that journal. In this letter, Sir Henry asserts that he has completed his medical curriculum, with the exception of passing his final examination—a somewhat important exception—and throws out a suggestion that he will do this immediately, in which case he challenges Mr. Wakley, the editor of the *Lancet*, to stand against him at the next election for the General Medical Council, and adds, with a conviction which is certainly not born of modesty, "I have had too many instances of the appreciation of my humble services in all branches of the medical profession to doubt, in such circumstances, what that issue would be."

It will be of interest to know on what grounds Sir Henry Burdett intends to stand as a candidate for the next vacancy on the Medical Council—scarcely for unique services rendered to the profession, which he has not yet entered. Will he pose as the medical champion of the interests of nurses, or as consultant and general adviser to hospital architects? Anyway, the election, when it comes off, will be watched with the keenest interest, an interest scarcely excited even by the interchange of courtesies between the two members of the General Medical Council, known as Bobadil and Balderdash. There will be tasty reading for medical and nursing circles when the election of Burdett *v.* Wakley comes on the *tapis*.

Appointment.

MISS GRACE NEWBERY has been lately appointed Matron to the Western Infirmary, Glasgow. Miss Newbery received her training in St. Thomas's Hospital, and performed the duties of Sister both in medical, surgical, and infectious wards. In 1888 she was appointed Night-Superintendent of the Royal Infirmary, Liverpool, subsequently being given the post of Assistant Lady Superintendent in the Nurses' Training School, which she held for six years. In 1894 Miss Newbery was appointed Matron of the Royal Hospital, Portsmouth, which position she resigned upon being selected from many candidates as Matron to the Western Infirmary, Glasgow. Miss Newbery holds the highest testimonials from the officials of many institutions in which she has worked, and we hope she will be equally successful in the somewhat difficult position to which she has been appointed.

A Question of Discipline.

WE alluded last week to the fact that the Night-Superintendent (a trained nurse with nine years' experience and good character) and several nurses on the staff of the Camberwell Infirmary had been made to resign by the Infirmary Board, without being afforded an opportunity of knowing the full extent of the delinquencies with which they were charged, or who was their accuser. This high-handed action upon the part of the Guardians appeared to us lacking in the very elements of justice, so we have taken some pains to ascertain facts concerning the present organization of the nursing department at the Camberwell Infirmary, and find that it is in a most unsatisfactory condition.

Primarily, the Matron of this large institution is not a trained nurse, nor is the Assistant Matron, so that no professional supervision of the nursing of the sick in the wards, nor the conduct of the nursing staff in the Home, is possible, as we at once disqualify the Medical Superintendent (and we hear praise on all sides of the manner in which he performs his own professional duties) for fitness to perform the Matron's duties. The discipline of the female staff can only be efficiently maintained in a hospital or infirmary where the Matron is placed in authority over the nurses, and is herself a trained nurse, and can, therefore, command the confidence, respect, and obedience of her junior officers.

The nurses at the Camberwell Infirmary are, therefore, like a flock of sheep without a shepherd.

We find that the old Workhouse, which has been strongly condemned as unfit for human habitation, and from which the medical staff and patients have been removed, is still used as the Nurses' Home! As a proof of its insanitary condition, the rats, which rush rampant through this disreputable old house, are proof positive. The window casements are gnawed away by these lively rodents, and the unwholesome stenches which arise from the basement prove, no doubt, that the drains are thoroughly out of repair, and we have no hesitation in saying that the lives of the nurses are risked daily by housing them in this condemned building. There has been constant sickness amongst the nursing staff, and outbreaks amongst the patients of diphtheria, scarlet fever, measles, and small-pox; to say nothing of erysipelas, and purulent ophthalmia amongst the unfortunate little children. So scandalous were these outbreaks that, as we have stated, patients and doctors were summarily removed, and only the unfortunate nurses left to run the risk of death and disease in this rat-eaten hole. The majority of nurses smoked in their bedrooms in self-defence, and small blame to them.

The nurses deny absolutely being guilty of unseemly conduct on duty. No supper parties they

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