

doctor considered that the baby had died from the effects of disease, and not directly from the injury. The facts prove that the nursing arrangements at this Workhouse Infirmary are extremely defective, and require the careful attention of the guardians. As a matter of principle, no well-trained nurse would approve of children being left for three-quarters of an hour, either day or night, unattended and uncared for, and it certainly appears to us to be extraordinary that a nurse should take upon herself to conceal from the medical officer the fact that an infant of ten months old had fallen out of its cot on to the floor. Nursing discipline must be in an unusual state in the Chelsea Infirmary if the medical officers are thus ignored by the nursing staff. We have, on many occasions, been compelled to ask for justice for the matron and nurses of workhouse infirmaries; but we have never before found it necessary to insist that both duty and honour require the nursing staff to remember their responsibilities to the medical officers of any public institution. It is a humiliating fact that it should have been left to a coroner's jury to censure the inefficient nursing arrangements in connection with the death of this poor child, and for the credit of the infirmary it is to be hoped that the guardians will as speedily as possible inquire fully into the matter, and obtain independent expert advice and assistance, so that the possibility of any similar scandal in the future may be prevented. This is not, as the guardians are well aware, the first occasion during the past three years, upon which the nursing arrangements at their infirmary have been seriously discussed.

THE PENZANCE GUARDIANS.

THE Penzance Guardians have thrown down the glove to the Local Government Board by acting in direct defiance of their expressed opinion. The post of head nurse having to be filled up by the guardians, they appointed the assistant nurse, Miss Kitto, to this position. The Local Government Board then pointed out that they were of opinion that the post of head nurse should be held by a duly trained person. Miss Kitto had had no hospital training of any kind, besides having no certificate in midwifery. Mr. G. Carter (vice-chairman, Madron), suggested that Miss Kitto might be sent to a home for

six months, to qualify for the position of head nurse! The futility of such a suggestion is sufficient to show that the guardians have no conception as to what is comprised in "training," or what qualifications are required in a head nurse if the sick under her charge are to be efficiently cared for. That an untrained person can in six months acquire the knowledge requisite for this position is manifestly an absurdity, and simply demonstrates the ignorance of nursing matters of the member of the Board who made the suggestion. In spite of her want of qualifications for the post, however, and in spite of the strong opinion of the Local Government Board, as to the impropriety of the appointment, the guardians proceeded to appoint Miss Kitto to the vacant post by nineteen votes to two. It remains to be seen what action will be taken by the Local Government Board, on their being acquainted with the total disregard of the Penzance Guardians for their wishes.

SIR HENRY BURDETT, K.C.B.

THE following paragraph, which appeared in the *Westminster Gazette* on February 8th, contains statements which will cause surprise to many nurses, and a few medical men. We have reason to believe that the members of the Stock Exchange have quite endorsed the decision of their committee. The paragraph is as follows:—

"No halo of dignity surrounds the retirement of Sir Henry Burdett from the Stock Exchange. Let us put it briefly. First, the trustees and managers sent him a thousand guineas (with cordial wishes for health, happiness, and prosperity in his new work) to buy himself a service of plate. Then Sir Henry wanted to know what the pension would be. The trustees and managers replied that the circumstances under which his retirement had taken place did not justify them in granting a pension, and that they were convinced the opinion of members of the Stock Exchange generally would be strongly opposed to any such grant. Then Sir Henry pointed out that he had added £3800 a year to the resources of the managers by the reorganization of the stamp department—in connection with which he had sacrificed a pension of £800 a year—and also a capital sum of at least £30,000 in the copyright of "Burdett's Official Intelligence." He, moreover, pleaded that he resigned his position in order to live a little longer with his family, and that he had saved comparatively nothing. The reply was that the trustees and managers, having carefully considered the question, could not reopen it. And now Sir Henry has returned the thousand-guinea cheque, and has diverted his appeal from the trustees and managers to the members of the Stock Exchange themselves."

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)