

very few Matrons who will condescend to accept the undignified position on the Association, which under the new bye-laws will be their only portion, and who therefore, will join its ranks? The injury to the Nurses' Association from the dishonourable breach of faith with the Matrons which has now been committed will be, for a time at any rate, irreparable, for not only will the Matrons be alienated from all sympathy with and support of the Association, but the best trained nurses will also refuse to join a body which has proved itself to be so oblivious of good faith.

There, however, remains for the Matrons the necessity and the duty of standing true to the principles for which they were originally associated. We especially mention the Matrons, because position begets responsibility, and it is undoubtedly to the heads of their training schools that the rank and file of the nursing profession will look for guidance at the present crisis. It was the influence of the Matrons which originally brought the members into the Association, and we do not doubt that the secession of Matrons will be followed by a secession of their pupils. The legitimate powers of self-government have been taken from the nurses, in their own Association, but their duty to their profession remains. This is not to stand aside, but to enlist the sympathy of the public, by bringing the necessity for Nursing reforms actively forward, and by convincing them that a "nobbled" Nursing profession is a public danger.

Annotations.

A DEPARTMENTAL INQUIRY.

WE observe, with satisfaction, that the *Lancet* is drawing attention to the difficulty of obtaining nurses for workhouse infirmaries. Our contemporary says: "The difficulty experienced by county and provincial guardians in procuring nurses is really becoming acute, and unless something can be done, the "Order" (of the Local Government Board) will be in danger of becoming a dead letter, from lack of trained nurses to fill the vacancies. We constantly hear of guardians advertising for months unsuccessfully, although offering, in some instances, fair, and even handsome salaries. Is it not time that the question was submitted to the investigation of a depart-

mental committee, so that the extent of the difficulty, and the best means of remedy might be fully revealed." There is no doubt that this would be by far the most satisfactory method of dealing with the difficulty. We would suggest, however, that any inquiry which takes place should be made not only into the nursing of workhouses, but also into the whole nursing question. With regard to the nursing of workhouses, we have no doubt that the difficulty of obtaining good nurses will remain until the Superintendents of Nurses are accorded the position due to the responsible office they hold. Until the Superintendent is treated with proper respect by the Guardians, and her authority in maintaining necessary discipline is upheld, the best women will not apply for these posts, or if they apply for them, will resign them when they find the indignities to which they are subjected in the performance of their duty. Neither will the right sort of nurses apply—even if well paid—for posts in institutions where a lack of discipline prevails. The reports of the meetings of Boards of Guardians, which appear from time to time in the daily press, are quite sufficient to deter any well-trained nurses from applying for posts in the institutions over which some of them preside.

THE MIDDLESEX HOSPITAL.

IT is stated that the Middlesex Hospital is in such financial straits that its income last year from subscriptions and donations was £11,000 under the cost of management, and that the Committee has been compelled to sell £10,000 of railway stock in order to avert the only other alternative, that of closing beds. This condition of affairs is not altogether a matter for surprise, as the public are aware that the Committee of the Middlesex Hospital have devoted thousands of pounds towards the maintenance of their medical school, which means that the cost of the medical education of the students at the Middlesex Hospital is defrayed in part by the subscriptions of the charitable. We have previously drawn attention to this fact, which we hold to be entirely without justification. If the reputation of the lecturers in connection with this Medical School is not sufficiently high to attract a large enough number of students to make the school self-supporting, the sooner it ceases to exist the better.

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