

At an inquest recently held upon a man who died at the Woking Hospital, it was alleged that "the nurses were nasty to him, and handled him roughly." The son of the deceased man also asserted that on one occasion when visiting his father, he rang the bell eight times before the nurse came. When at last she came, she said: "It is not our custom to get up from our meals." The arrangements of the institution would seem to be at fault. Nurses must have time for their meals, but patients must not be left alone. The obvious alternative is that the nurses should not all have their meals at the same time. The inquest has been adjourned, and it is expected that there will be an enquiry into the facts of the case.

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AN Ex-Union Infirmiry Nurse, in writing to the press, pertinently points out, with regard to Workhouse Infirmiry Nursing, that the really important point which needs attention is, not the obtaining of thoroughly qualified nurses, but that the conditions of the institutions in which they work should be such as to make it possible for skilled nurses to remain in them. Notably the laundry and sanitary arrangements are most unsatisfactory, and require much improvement. It is not to be supposed that trained nurses will be attracted to, or remain in, institutions where they cannot obtain things which are necessary to the performance of their duty. Conscientious women prefer not to attempt to make bricks without straw. The Local Government Board should require of the Guardians of Workhouse Infirmaries that proper quarters, food, and time for recreation should be provided for their nurses, and that, moreover, necessary nursing appliances should be supplied.

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OUR remarks on the Irish nursing question have evoked a letter from a correspondent in Ireland whose views, from the position she holds in the nursing world, command respect. Our correspondent thinks that all who know anything of workhouse infirmaries will rejoice that the Local Government Board is anxious to make improvements, but that it does not follow that the Board have set about accomplishing the end they have in view in the wisest and surest way of attaining it. She is of opinion that the Medical Superintendents of the Infirmaries who are aware of their difficulties and necessities, and, therefore, are the people most competent to make suggestions, should have been consulted, before the new regulations were made.

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MANY of the Union Infirmaries contain but few beds. Our correspondent therefore thinks

that there is no necessity for the nurses to have received their training in a large hospital, or that they should be required to have a knowledge of fever nursing. That there always has, and always will be, great difficulty in obtaining nurses for the workhouse infirmaries, and that the Local Government Board has added difficulties by disqualifying nurses trained in the County Hospitals on account of the number of beds. That what is most important is that the status of the nurse should be improved. She should be subject only to the Medical Superintendent, not to the Master and Matron, and proper accommodation and attendance should be provided for her. At present the nurses, as a rule, have not only to perform their nursing duties, but also to do their own cooking.

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WELL trained nurses, of course, will not be attracted to posts carrying with them the drawbacks detailed above. Why should they be, when they can readily obtain more congenial work? The question of the disqualification of the County Infirmaries as training schools is a serious one. There is no doubt that nurses can be well trained in an institution having less than 150 beds, and, indeed, the quality of the training given is quite as important a factor as the number of beds. In large institutions the chief advantage obtained that, when well organized; discipline there reaches perfection. With regard to the actual nursing, however large the institution, a nurse can only be in one ward at a time, and there is moreover a tendency to specialization which is absent in the smaller institutions, so that a nurse may even see in the course of her training in a comparatively small hospital a greater variety of cases than in a larger one.

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THE question of what constitutes an efficient training grows in interest, and may well be threshed out at the coming Congress.

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WHAT is more refreshing to a weary nurse than to escape for a while to fresh scenes? A visit to foreign countries, if only a short one, is a most delightful rest; but many nurses who would like to go abroad are often deterred by their lack of knowledge of foreign languages, the want of companionship, and their ignorance of where to go, and how to get there. We are, therefore, glad to give prominence to a notice sent us by Mr. Samuel Wells, F.R.G.S., F.A.I., that any lady desiring to join a private party on a holiday trip to the Italian Lakes, leaving on May 27th for a fortnight, at a cost of £11 11s., is requested to send for details to Miss Wells, Frenchgate, Richmond, Yorkshire.

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