

self-destruction is one to which the present age is painfully prone, and in so large a community as that of nurses, it cannot be expected it can be wholly absent. At the same time we must point out that it is, we believe, largely due to the prevalent condition of mental over-strain which is so common at the present day, and of which the full force is felt by nurses whose heavy responsibilities become more and more onerous. It is therefore incumbent upon all hospital committees, to see to it that the conditions under which their nurses work are made as lenient as possible, and we fully believe that those responsible for the well being of nurses in public institutions are becoming more and more alive to this duty.

THE strain of anxiety is, however, keenly felt by private nurses, and we desire to point out to employers that it is necessary that nurses should have sufficient time off duty for a reasonable amount of sleep and bodily exercise, and also that their food should be good and sufficient, if they are to perform their work satisfactorily. The laws of nature cannot be transgressed with impunity, and a nurse's work inevitably deteriorates if she has to forego sleep and fresh air. It is not easy always to arrange for the absence of a nurse, and the public are somewhat apt to think that "nurses are trained to do without sleep," but any systematic curtailment of the requirements of nature without doubt re-acts prejudicially for the patient, and there is besides serious danger of a break-down of the nurse's mental condition. It is in the hope that members of the public may assimilate these truths that we give publicity to them.

STILL the cry is—no nurses to be obtained by country Boards of Guardians, and this in spite of extensive advertising; the more general, and more bitter the cry, the better; the demand usually produces the supply, and it will compel the Local Government Board to take steps to *make* nurses, to attend to the indigent poor, in work-house wards.

WE notice that the nursing staff of the Eastfield Hospital are to be supplied with uniform, in lieu of money payment. This is good, as, if nurses provide their own working costume, the result is apt to be anything but uniform, and the general appearance of the staff suffers in consequence. We are sorry, however, that serge dresses are to be provided for the superintendents. All dresses worn by those in attendance upon the sick should be of washing material, and in instituting a fresh arrangement it seems a pity not to follow the examples of the best training schools in this respect.

THE Local Government Board has intimated to the Clonmel Guardians that the probationers trained in their infirmary cannot acquire the status of trained nurses, unless in addition to their three years' service at Clonmel they spend eighteen months in a Dublin hospital. This action of the Local Government Board seems the more deplorable because a scheme has been inaugurated by the Clonmel Guardians by which the nursing in their infirmary, which contains 215 beds, has been greatly improved. Probationers have been received for training on a three years agreement, under the superintendence of Miss Holcroft, a thoroughly experienced nurse, and they have had lectures from Dr. Crean, the medical superintendent.

THE Clonmel probationers have memorialized the Local Government Board, and have stated that at the expiration of their term of service they will be quite willing to compete in an examination in surgical, medical, and fever work with eighteen nurses taken from any Dublin institution. We are glad to observe that the Guardians are strongly supporting their protest. Dr. Crean, the medical superintendent, is of opinion that if the Local Government Board persists in imposing this disability that the Guardians will be compelled to revert to the cruel and odious system of pauper nursing. We hope that the Local Government Board will reconsider its decision, and will do all in its power to encourage the Clonmel Guardians in their praiseworthy efforts to raise the standard of nursing in their infirmary.

THE staff of nurses in the Royal Infirmary, Edinburgh, recently held their annual social gathering. The event is looked forward to with much interest by the nurses, who extend an invitation to representatives from kindred institutions in the city, and to a number of citizens, and is one of public importance. Ward IV., where the gathering was held, was laid out in drawing-room style, the decorations being very pretty and effective. The guests were received by Miss Spencer, the Lady Superintendent, and they included Lord Provost Mitchell Thomson, Mrs. Mitchell Thomson, Lady Struthers, Miss Louisa Stevenson, Surgeon Major-General Lithgow, the superintendent, Mr. William S. Caw, the treasurer and clerk, and other officials of the Infirmary.

Prizes given to those probationers who had excelled in the examinations conducted in the Infirmary in the various nursing classes during the year were distributed by the Lord Provost in the course of the proceedings. His Lordship said there would be only one opinion with regard to the deep debt of gratitude that the citizens of

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)