

FRICION has occurred between a member of the medical staff and the present Matron of the Lowestoft Hospital, Miss Howes, which has resulted in the resignation of the medical man in consequence of the Committee having refused to discharge the Matron at his request. We feel sure that the Committee have taken a wise course in passing the following resolution unanimously:—"That they do not feel at the present time there is sufficient justification to call for the Matron's resignation. At the same time, they are agreed that the Hospital must not suffer by disagreement amongst those who are responsible for its being carried on. The Committee trust, after the explanations on both sides, there will be a conciliatory course pursued in the future, and with this hope they suspend action." The treatment and ultimate resignation of a late Matron at this hospital is still fresh in our memory.

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We have received the following communication from the relative of a nurse at the Kent and Canterbury Hospital, and as we have, on previous occasions, heard that the nursing department at this institution leaves much to be desired before it can be considered in a satisfactory condition, either from the view of the public or nurses, we give space to this communication in the hope that the Committee will at once take steps to compare their nursing system with that of well-managed hospitals, and institute the numerous reforms which are apparently necessary.

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OUR correspondent writes:—"It is to be regretted that, in this age of reforms, there should still be a hospital where nurses can be badly fed and ill-treated by the officials with impunity; but this seems to be the case at the Kent and Canterbury Hospital. It appears that, for some time past, there has been a slowly but surely growing discontent among the nursing staff at the inferior, half-cooked, and, in some cases, scanty food, and added to this the extraordinary conduct of the Matron, who seems to have tried to brow-beat them, scolding them when unwell, so that the timid ones dared not own that they were ill so long as they were able to stand. She was also in the habit of finding fault with them before their companions—in the wards or at meals. At last things have reached a crisis: a petition for better diet and kinder treatment was sent in to the Committee by the Sisters and nurses. The said Committee appears to be typical of a sleepy 'Cathedral City.' It examined the nurses in a half-hearted way, found that their testimony agreed entirely, and then, terrified at its own boldness, gently told the Matron 'to be more kind to her nurses.' Matters, therefore, remain in *statu quo*, if this be possible after

they have come to such a pass as to call forth a formal and united protest. The whole affair seems eminently discreditable to Canterbury, and should a dearth of probationers ensue, the Committee need feel neither surprised nor aggrieved."

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WE are glad to notice that, by the request of Mrs. Ellis, the Matron of the Stratford-on-Avon Joint Infectious Hospital, a public inquiry has been held at the Town Hall, Stratford, to investigate charges which have been made recently against the management of the hospital, and which were reported in this journal. Mr. A. E. Park presided. Mr. R. Lunn, clerk to the joint board, said he had informed the rural authorities of the enquiry, and stated that it would be open to the public, and that all who had evidence to give could attend and would be heard. This is a most satisfactory way of dealing with the matter, and we congratulate Mrs. Ellis upon the course she has pursued in asking for it.

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THE Committee appointed to investigate the complaints made, first heard evidence with regard to the child who, it was alleged, contracted diphtheria while in the hospital. The father gave evidence as to the sanitary condition of his own dwelling, and the Matron described the condition of the girl. There was no certified case of diphtheria in the hospital at the time of her discharge. As, however, the medical superintendent certified that the child was fit to be sent out, no responsibility on this count can rest with the Matron.

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WITH regard to the two children who, it was asserted, were sent out of the hospital with dirty heads, a letter was read from the mother saying that one of the children was not clean when she came home, but she made every allowance on account of the child's illness, and had no complaint to make against the management.

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THE mother of another child complained that her child went into the hospital and died three days after. She received a telegram saying that the child was very ill, when it must have been dead. The medical superintendent stated that the child was admitted in a very emaciated condition with malignant scarlet fever and died of it, and the Matron said that she was present at the child's death, which was unexpected.

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As no more evidence was offered, the Chairman said that, so far as the attendance of the public was concerned, the enquiry was closed. The Committee would deliberate in private, and would make public the result of their deliberations in due course.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)