

ONCE more a verdict of "Suicide whilst temporarily insane" has been found by a jury, relating to the sad death of Frances Edwards, described as "a lady nurse," who poisoned herself with carbolic acid in a railway carriage when travelling between Scarborough and York. It was stated that the unhappy girl had been dismissed from her situation as a professional nurse at Scarborough for dishonesty, and that she was returning to Sheffield, but destroyed herself by the way. The deceased having no money, has been buried by the Local Poor Law authorities. What a grievous story! and not by any means singular.

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THE sooner the Barnsley Board of Guardians set their house in order the better, and provide efficient labour to keep the sick wards clean, instead of attempting to make a scape-goat of the Superintendent Nurse, because dirt and fluff are abundantly apparent on the floors. At a recent meeting of this Board it came out in evidence that the only assistance provided for ward cleaning was that of "two old men, one of them nearly blind, and the other lame." If anyone is to blame, it is the Matron, who is responsible for the cleanliness of the wards, and not the Superintendent Nurse.

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THE case of a nurse, recently in the employ of the Metropolitan Asylums Board at the North Eastern Hospital, Tottenham, is one which calls for liberal treatment on the part of the Board. The nurse entered the service of the Hospital on August 14th, 1897, and on October 25th, 1897, went off duty, being attacked by scarlet fever. She was never able to resume duty, and after a report by the medical superintendent, Dr. Cuff, in the spring of last year, that "she would probably never be fit for hospital work again," she was admitted into Guy's Hospital, where, after a stay of nine months, she was discharged as incurable. There is no doubt, according to Dr. Cuff's report of the case, that the nurse contracted Bright's disease as a result of the attack of scarlet fever.

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THE nurse, upon her appointment, gave notice not to avail herself of the Poor Law Officers' Superannuation Act, 1896, but the managers have power to make her a grant, with the assent of the Local Government Board. A recommendation was, therefore, last week, brought before the Metropolitan Asylums Board by the North-Eastern Committee that the sum of £30 should be granted to the nurse. Several members urged that this recommendation was not liberal enough, and one member moved an amendment that the sum should be doubled. Ultimately, the question was

referred to the General Purposes Committee. There can be no doubt that a nurse who is permanently disabled by illness contracted in the discharge of her duty, is entitled to substantial compensation, and the Metropolitan Asylums Board is usually so liberal as regards its nurses that we have every hope that they will carry this rule into practice in the present instance. The suggestion of some members of the Board that the nurse should be paid an annual sum for some years appears to be a good one.

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IT is reported that the whole staff of male attendants at the hospital at Lagos struck work owing to dissatisfaction at the refusal of the acting-chief medical officer to forward a written statement of their grievances to the Governor. The men were given five minutes to consider the question of resuming duty unreservedly or quitting the service. They decided for the latter alternative, and, to the number of seventeen, abandoned work.

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THIS is the efficacious means by which men obtain redress for wrongs. They do not grumble privately and go on interminably bearing injustice, and thereby supporting tyranny. They boldly state their case, demand redress, and if that redress through the official channel is not forthcoming, they go, and reform is speedily inaugurated. We, of course, cannot approve of any nurse, male or female, leaving the sick to suffer, but we do approve of straightforward and firm insistence upon just conditions of labour, and power to nurse the sick efficiently.

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TAKE the nursing in our own Workhouse wards, where no separate infirmary exists, and where the authority of ignorant Masters and Matrons over trained women nurses makes efficient work impossible. Is it not presumable that with more moral courage and official complaints carried to head quarters, this impossible and intolerable system would have long since been reformed by the Local Government Board—we feel certain it would. As it is, women come, and women go—they grumble, rebel, and disappear, but to combine to bring their just grievances before the right authority, and the public, never occurs to them. This lack of fixity of purpose and moral courage is, indeed, the reason of our undoing.

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WOMEN have, of course, never been encouraged to continue, and have met with considerable opposition when they attempted to do so. The necessity for unions is being learned by bitter experience.

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