

dealing with this matter. (See Twenty-ninth Annual Report of the Local Government Board, Appendix B. pages 98, 138.)

4. Owing to the scarcity of trained Nurses available, also to a false idea of economy, Guardians engage young women as Probationers in situations where the means of training do not exist; a system alike injurious to the interests of Patients and of Probationers. (See Twenty-ninth Annual Report of the Local Government Board, Appendix B. page 120.)

5. The Order only *insists* upon the Superintendent Nurse being properly trained. Thus details of the actual nursing are often left to inefficient persons or those trained in small country Workhouse Infirmaries.

6. The trained Superintendent is, according to the Order, under the control of the Workhouse Master and Matron in certain important departments of her work. The proper supply of linen and the dietary essential for the sick may be, and often is, interfered with by a Master and Matron who, untrained in such matters, do not recognise their importance. Friction between the Master and Matron and the Nurses is a very serious hindrance to improvement in the administration of Workhouse Infirmaries. (See Twenty-ninth Annual Report of the Local Government Board, Appendix B. page 119.)

It is therefore a well-attested fact that the efficient nursing in Workhouse Infirmaries is hampered by serious difficulties. The main points that present themselves in a review of these difficulties may be stated thus:—

A. (a) Unqualified women are employed as Nurses. (b) Inexperienced Probationers are employed as Nurses. (c) Paupers are employed as Nurses.

B. No provision is made in the Order for the thorough training or promotion of Probationers and Assistant Nurses, to enable them to rise in the future to the position of Superintendents. The effect of this must be, that the general standard of nursing will be lowered instead of raised; while the care of the Patients is largely in the hands of insufficiently trained assistants.

The disproportion between Nurses and Patients involves serious neglect of the sick by night. (See Twenty-ninth Annual Report of the Local Government Board, Appendix B. pages 93, 120, 137.)

C. Also owing to the lack of candidates, the Local Government Board is sometimes obliged to sanction the appointment as Superintendents, of Nurses who are not trained according to Article III (3) of the Order.

D. The serious defects in Nursing lead to frequent and regrettable cases of neglect, and

sometimes to tragic consequences. (See Twenty-ninth Annual Report of the Local Government Board, Appendix B. pages 138, 139.)

E. The absence of a fixed policy, and a uniform standard of efficiency for all Infirmaries, as well as of any system of a fixed period of service, leaves the administration of these Institutions to the chance decisions of individual Boards of Guardians. The result is that some Infirmaries are well organized, and others are far from being a credit to our civilization. (See Twenty-ninth Annual Report of the Local Government Board, Appendix B. pages 97-119.)

Reference has been made throughout this Statement to the Reports of the Poor Law Inspectors for 1899-90, as they form, in our view, a strong consensus of opinion on many of the points brought forward.

We trust that we have shown the necessity for revision of the system, in order to secure a better supply of trained Nurses. And we respectfully submit that the Order of August, 1897, should be strengthened, and that such other steps be taken as a full consideration of the subject may show to be needful.

We feel great anxiety on the matter, which seems to us one of the most pressing importance, and we should be very glad if you would favour two or three members of our Committee with an interview, when we would be willing to lay before you the suggestions which we are prepared to offer.

We beg to remain, Sir,

Yours faithfully,

(Signed by) Lily Belhaven and Stenton.
F. U. Boyd, M.D.
Sibella C. Bonham-Carter.
W. Chance.
M. Fuller.
A. C. Gibson (Matron of Birmingham Infirmary).
Mary S. Hardcastle.
F. R. Humphreys, L.R.C.P.
Margaret Knutsford.
C. S. Montagu, of Beaulieu.
Margaret Powell.
T. Dixon Savill, M.D. London,
D.P.H. Cambridge.
E. Murray-Smith.
M. S. Talbot, Vice-President, and
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Committee.
Louisa Twining, Vice-President.
H. S. Wantage.
J. Wilson, Hon. Treasurer.
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R. V. Gill, Secretary.

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