

are in nearly every such case too small to train probationers properly, and must be dependent upon nurses trained elsewhere.

Dr. Toogood says that it is impossible to train probationers in country infirmaries because of the want of suitable training material. But lower down he contradicts this, for he says: "The larger infirmaries can and do train their nurses as thoroughly and as fully as any of the hospitals." My scheme is to so combine the patients of the small infirmaries as to form large enough institutions to be capable of training probationers.

Your correspondent says that my scheme would mean the expenditure of millions. The fact is, however, as I have already shown, that Boards of Guardians are wasting immense sums of money annually on "improvements" of the existing buildings, or in badly considered new buildings. About £100,000 was expended in improving existing buildings in 1899-1900. Other large sums were spent on improving some of the separate infirmaries. It is time that parochial politics gave place to the general interests of the Poor Law service, and that these sums should be spent on institutions calculated to benefit the whole service, and in furtherance of some general scheme of organization.

There is one more difficulty which Dr. Toogood seems to consider as final in the matter of the scheme I have draited. This is the distance which patients would have to be carried to the Central Institutions. But the extreme distance of any of the Unions from the Central Institution to which they are affiliated

would only be fifteen miles by road, or thirty by train. Surely Dr. Toogood would not think this too far? The removal of a patient would, of course, be subject to the certificate of the medical officer for the District Workhouse.

My scheme provides for the nursing of acute cases at their own Unions.

Country people think nothing of such distances, and patients in a critical condition often travel up to General Hospitals from far longer distances.

Finally, I would say that one leading feature in my scheme is the establishment of one standard for the nursing of every case which enters the sick wards of a workhouse, small or large, in town or in the country. The pioneer work of the Workhouse Infirmery Nursing Association—about which your correspondent is as bitter as he is evidently ignorant—was directed to this end, and it only ceased to train nurses when, while feeling that the system should be self-supporting, it decided that the supply of nurses had become too large to be dealt with by a voluntary Association. So far from "making spies and rebels of" its nurses, it was almost invariably the rule that when its support and encouragement were withdrawn, for any reason, from its nurses, that they found it impossible to stay any longer in the Workhouse Infirmery. The desire, which is constantly expressed, that the Association would re-start its work of training nurses at once, disproves any such uncalled for charge as that which Dr. Toogood makes, and which he should withdraw.

Very faithfully yours, F. R. HUMPHREYS.
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