

We recently reported the dismissal of three nurses at Newington Workhouse for not having reported the existence of most extensive bruises "on many parts of the body of an aged female lunatic." The Rev. W. J. Somerville (a member of the board) has addressed a petition to the Local Government Board asking that these nurses should have an opportunity of stating their case to it, and offering to pay the fee of a solicitor to represent them. He contends that the only offence proved was that one officer transgressed the rules by leaving her ward, and the others resolved to stand by her.

It has never yet been ascertained who inflicted the injuries which caused the terrible bruises discovered on this poor old lunatic. Personally we should have thought, setting this question aside, that if a nurse had so little sense of her responsibility as to leave a ward in which she had charge of lunatics, and her fellow nurses agreed to condone her delinquency to the extent of neglecting to report injuries to a patient, all were unworthy of trust and deserving of dismissal. We think Mr. Somerville could spend his money to better advantage in protecting helpless patients from injury, instead of endeavouring to exonerate women who have proved themselves unworthy of trust.

At the sixth annual meeting of the Brighton, Hove, and Preston District Nursing Association, at which Canon Hoskyns, Vicar of Brighton, presided, an increasing deficit was reported, and an earnest appeal made for increased support. The Chairman said the work of the Association was a work concerning which there could be no two opinions. Everyone who knew the splendid and devoted work of the Queen's nurses throughout the country must feel that it was their absolute duty, whether they were religious people or not, to support them. It was probably because a very large number of people were ignorant of the greatness of the work that the amount of support accorded the Association had not been what it should, and that a certain number of nurses had had to be withdrawn from the work in Brighton during the past year. It, therefore, behoved everyone to do his very best to awaken wider interest in the work.

The Committee, in their report, said that they had again appealed for more generous support, but, with a few notable exceptions, had met with no response. It was incredible that the large districts in which the nurses worked could not raise the funds required. We agree with this view, and regret that we should so frequently have to report a condition of things so discreditable to a wealthy town like Brighton.

Mr. Pound, the Chaplain of the South Devon and East Cornwall Hospital, asserts that the middle classes are outstripped in generosity in regard to the support of hospitals by the classes above and below them. It may be so, though we are inclined to think that, both as regards rates and taxes and also charitable subscriptions, the middle classes are expected to put their hands into their pockets more frequently than any other class. But, assuming this charge to be true, the reason surely need not be far to seek. The hospitals provide efficiently for the treatment and nursing of the artisan classes, and they train nurses for private cases whose services are procurable at fees which only the rich can afford. They have so far made practically no provision, either by providing wards in which paying patients can be received or otherwise, for the efficient nursing of the middle classes.

On Wednesday in last week a most disastrous fire, the worst known for many years in Stockport, broke out in the Vernon Cotton Spinning Mills. It originated on the third floor, and spread so quickly, that those working on that floor and on those above, were cut off from the staircase.

Many were badly burnt, chiefly about the head and upper part of the body, and many jumped from the third and fourth storeys or slid down ropes sooner than wait for the fire escape. Some were badly cut by the broken glass of the windows, and others fearfully hurt by the fall. In a little over an hour twenty-four men and boys were admitted to the Stockport Infirmary, the larger number suffering severely from burns and shock. One of the women's wards was promptly emptied to meet the rush, those that were fit sent home, and a few put in an unused room for the night. The male isolation ward, which holds as a rule one bed, had three added, and the same was done in the theatre isolation ward. Children were packed as closely as possible for the time being, and several cots had two occupants. In fact, in the space of an hour all twenty-four cases were in bed, dressed, and made as comfortable as possible under the circumstances. Fortunately the three house surgeons and nearly all the nursing staff were on duty at the time. Several of the staff were soon on the spot, all working with a will, as well as some gentlemen of the town, who were most helpful in getting the poor men to bed and attending to them after. But the sad fact remains that in spite of all their care six of the patients have died, and several others are in a very critical condition.

An interesting meeting was held recently in the National Schoolroom, Oldland Common, near Bristol, in connection with the Victorian Jubilee

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