

were no ward maids, and the nurses had to cook and eat their food in the ward kitchens when they could snatch time to do so. As well as the ward work of to-day, the assistant probationers had to carry all the coals from the Hospital yard to the top of the building, wash the ward floors, and wash the steps of the Hospital stairs from top to bottom, and the assistant whose day on it was for this last task had to rise at 4 a.m. in order to get it accomplished before her nursing work proper began. In addition to all these calls on her time and strength, each nurse had to leave her wards to do her own laundry work. Of the total number of hospital nurses at that time we have no record, but we know that surgical divisions of the Hospital, which, then as now, contain thirty beds, and which the Home now supplies with two nurses and five probationers, and special nurses for critical cases as required, were then nursed by two nurses and two assistants; and the medical divisions of thirty beds by two nurses and only one assistant, and no specials—none being available—whilst trained nurses for private work there were none in the North of Ireland.

“With the establishment of the Home the means of housing and boarding all of the nursing staff comfortably began. Probationers were carefully selected by a responsible committee, were placed under qualified superintendence, and under an organised system of training in both Home and Hospital. Habits of method, order, and punctuality were taught, the health of the nurses was well looked after, and no nurse but those faithful to the Home's principle of total abstinence has ever been retained on either Hospital or private staff. The standard of general efficiency was gradually raised, and has been secured by a careful theoretical education in the Home, and by an uninterrupted experience in the Hospital, and afterwards on the private staff, before the nurses were certificated. The Board are happy to acknowledge that the above improvement has been greatly facilitated by the fact that the Hospital Board have from time to time relieved the nurses of the menial duties here referred to, and thereby have co-operated with this Board in affording opportunities to the nurses for attending to the training and to the duties proper to their profession. The probationary time now required is four years—that is to say, two years in Hospital and two years on private staff—before certificates are granted. Since the Home was established, at least 300 nurses have been trained by it, and have gone out to positions of trust, and a staff of private nurses has been annually supplied to the public. The best proof of the value of their services is the fact that the Home has never been able to keep the supply of them equal to the demand.

“It will be seen by our Treasurer's report that we close our financial year with a debt of £486 14s. 8d., so that we shall certainly require the continued support of our subscribers for another year. With their kind aid we hope our gradually decreasing debt will then become extinct, but if any generous friend or friends in the community would think fit to clear us absolutely of debt before we reorganise the Home they would give us the great advantage of making a clear start.”

In view of all that it has accomplished, and of the benevolent designs which are cherished by the Committee of Management, the claims of the Home upon the public must be admitted to be of the strongest.

May we hope that in future the term of training for members of the staff may be raised to three instead of two years—this time is all too short in which to acquire a thorough knowledge of modern nursing; and as all the Government Nursing Services—such as the Army, Navy, and English Local Government Board—require a certificate of three years' hospital training, it is only fair that Irish nursing institutions should work up to this standard, and thus qualify the nurses for the best appointments in the United Kingdom.

### Cruelty to Children.

It would seem that Mr. Justice Bigham is visiting his disapproval of the national verdict on the inadequate sentence which he imposed in the notorious Penruddocke case upon the Society which performed public service in prosecuting Mrs. Penruddocke—the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. Dealing at the Old Bailey last week with two alleged cases of cruelty to children Mr. Justice Bigham said, in relation to this Society:—“As to the Society he did not hesitate to say that the jury ought to sift the evidence of people, he would not say whose object it was to get a conviction, but whose object, at all events, it was to support the prosecution—to sift their evidence carefully with the object of seeing that it was not exaggerated.”

Of course, but why choose the present moment for hurling this platitude at the N.S.P.C.C.? As a contemporary points out, a warning of this kind is equally applicable to the police. Those who care for children, and desire to protect them from the wanton suffering inflicted on them by inhumane parents, cannot do better than give effective support to the Society formed to safeguard their interests. The Society might well endeavour, not only to get a conviction, but, in cases of proved and gross cruelty, to ensure that the legal punishment shall be imprisonment without the option of a fine, so that the rich may not get off with a nominal penalty for a crime for which a poor person is sent to gaol.

Miss Eleanor Susannah Gale, the proprietress of a nursing home at Kilburn, charged with abandoning two infants, was again brought up at Marylebone on Tuesday and remanded. Mrs. Sach, the proprietress of a nursing home at East Finchley, charged with being an accessory to the murder of an infant, was brought up at Clerkenwell Police Court on the same day and also remanded.

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