

well as by the right leg. Except the blanket-gown, these men had no clothing; the room had the appearance of a dog-kennel. Chains were universally substituted for the strait-waistcoat. Those who were not cleanly, and all who were disinclined to get up, were allowed to lie in bed, in what state may be imagined.

"In one cell they found a patient, whose condition is represented in a plate in Esquiro's work, not much to the honour of English treatment. This patient's name was Norris. He had been a powerful and violent man. Having on one occasion resented what he considered some improper treatment by his keeper, he was fastened by a long chain, which was ingeniously passed through a wall into the next room, where the victorious keeper, out of the patient's reach, could drag the unfortunate man close to the wall whenever he pleased. To prevent this sort of outrage, poor Norris muffled the chain with straw, but the savage inclinations of the keeper were either checked by no superintending eye, or the officers of the asylum partook of his cruelty; for now a new and refined torture for the patient was invented in the shape of an ingenious apparatus of iron.

"A stout iron ring was riveted round his neck, from which a short chain passed to a ring, made to slide upwards or downwards on an upright massive iron bar, more than 6 ft. high, inserted into the wall. Round his body a strong iron bar, about 2 in. wide, was riveted; on each side of the bar was a circular projection, which, being fastened to and enclosing each of his arms, pinioned them close to his sides. The effect of this apparatus was that the patient could indeed raise himself up so as to stand against the wall, but could not stir one foot from it, could not walk one step, and could not even lie down, except on his back; and in this thralldom he had lived for twelve years. During much of that time he is reported to have been rational in his conversation. But for him in all those twelve years there had been no variety of any kind—no refreshing change, no relief, no fresh air, no exercise, no sight of fields or gardens, or earth, or heaven."

We have indeed much to be thankful for—that for ever is passed the terrible ignorance and the hardness of heart which could tolerate this appalling suffering of helpless human creatures. One wonders how a nation so steeped in brutality could dare to call itself Christian, and one wonders also if the proverbial "gentleness and virtue" attributed to our sex was after all nothing but a myth, the result of cowardly play-acting. How one thanks God for the dear stalwarts who came out of the cringing ranks, and threw down the gage to a false womanhood, and who, in publicly attacking the horrible abuses of their time, suffered a martyrdom to some even more horrible than that of cells, chains, bolts and bars! Dear, brave things, how one glows at the thought of them!

The meeting to discuss State Registration, kindly arranged by Miss Barton, Matron of the Chelsea Infirmary, will take place on Friday, the 16th, not on the 15th inst., at 8 p.m.

Workhouse Infirmary Nursing Association.

To the Editor of the "British Journal of Nursing."

DEAR MADAM,—We shall be much obliged if you will kindly insert the enclosed notice in this week's issue of the BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING. The matter is of very great importance to the nursing profession.—I am, Yours truly,

T. W. GILL, Secretary.

6, Adam Street, Adelphi, Strand, W.C.

DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE ON THE NURSING OF THE SICK POOR IN WORKHOUSES.

The Committee of the Workhouse Infirmary Nursing Association have drawn up a memorial, which will be forwarded to the President of the Local Government Board, protesting against the proposed creation of "qualified nurses"—viz., women trained for one year in a small workhouse, and holding a certificate of good conduct and proficiency from the Superintendent Nurse, Chairman of the Board of Guardians, and Medical Officer.

The memorial has already been influentially signed. A copy can be obtained by anyone desiring to sign on application to the Hon. Sydney Holland, the London Hospital, E., or the Secretary of the Association, at the office, 6, Adam Street, Adelphi, W.C.

Nursing under High Pressure.

The conditions of service of hospital nurses are just now receiving considerable attention, and within the last week the *Daily News* has given several columns of space to the discussion of the question. In an interview with a representative of that paper we were able to point out what appears to us the real reason for the frequent breakdown in health of nurses at the present day, namely, the high pressure, and mental and nerve strain, under which they work. That long hours are not the only, or the chief, cause of over-strain is evident from the consideration of the conditions of nursing labour in the past. In the last decade the hours on duty have been much shortened, and increased opportunities given for outdoor exercise. Whereas in the eighties it was quite usual for the working hours to be from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m., with only two evenings off duty—from 6 to 9—during the week, now most nurses get off duty at least every alternate day, while the working day often does not exceed nine hours. But, while formerly much more hard manual work was performed, the strain on the nervous system, caused by theoretical study and the execution of elaborate medical treatment, was not so great, and it is this which tells on the more sensitive probationers.

What is needed is not so much the reduction of hours on duty as the organisation of nursing education, the principles of theory being taught before a woman enters a hospital for her practical work.

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