

An inquest was recently held at Islington concerning the death of Eliza Charlotte Knight, aged ninety-six, the widow of a butcher. Deceased, who was in receipt of a Government annuity, was active for her age, but had recently been removed to the infirmary because she required increasing attention. While she was having a warm bath, the nurse noticed her arm drop to her side. She was taken to bed, and the arm was found to be broken. In spite of every attention, she died after some time. A verdict of accidental death was returned. Surely a frail old woman of ninety-six should be washed in bed instead of being taken to the bath-room in the ordinary way. And why should spontaneous fracture occur in the course of a bath?

We notice that in several of the provincial papers lately various writers have attempted to maintain that the fee of £2 2s. a week for the services of a private nurse is excessive. Indeed, the whole tendency at the present time on the part of the public is to obtain a reduction of fees wherever possible. We have for some time foreseen and drawn attention to this tendency, which presses very hardly on well-qualified nurses. There are several contributory causes, one being the underselling of the private nurse by hospitals and institutions, and another that the private nurse nowadays is a most uncertain quantity, and so many incompetent, ignorant, and obnoxious persons undertake private nursing work and demand a two-guinea fee, while their services are not worth a quarter of that sum, that it is scarcely surprising that the public grudge payment.

Of course, in the case of people with moderate means a nurse in the house is a costly item, but this is to be met not by expecting the nurse to give her services more or less gratuitously, but by prudence and foresight, and by some co-operative insurance scheme whereby provision can be made for securing the skilled nursing services when necessary. If the public need the services of a carpenter or a plumber, they do not expect their charges to be lowered because payment is inconvenient; they pay the current value of the work. Do they grudge nurses their fees because they are women and the value of women's work is always discounted?

The current issue of the *Journal of the Royal South Hants Nurses' League* is largely devoted to a report on the Berlin Women's Congress by Miss Mollett. The interest aroused in and by this wonderful Congress has not yet passed away, and, indeed, to those who were privileged to be present its inspiration must throughout life be an abiding one. The excellent photograph of members and associates of the League present at the General Council Meeting, which forms the frontispiece of the journal,

was taken by Miss M. C. Fair, whose ability in this respect will be remembered by the nurses present in Berlin. There is a bright and airy touch about the whole journal, which makes it eminently readable. How could it be otherwise with an editorial staff which includes Miss Mollett and Miss Fair?

We hear much of the delinquencies of nurses in these days, but the unostentatious way in which they daily perform duties involving peril to life, and often in the interest of their patients or the public undertake work which cannot be said to be in their department, frequently escapes notice. A recent instance is the action of Nurse Fulton and Nurse Enraght, of the Irvinestone Workhouse, in relation to the death of a boy who had been suffering from small-pox. It was only after considerable trouble that men could be obtained to bury the remains, and they declined to enter the fever hospital to bring out the coffin. The nurses undertook this, and, with the assistance of the chaplain (Rev. W. J. Nicholson), had commenced to cover the coffin in the grave when the two men appeared on the scene. The rest of the work was left to them, but the nurses had intended to complete the burial. The circumstances were reported to the Guardians at their usual meeting, and it was here elicited that, as there was no one else to be found at the time for the purpose, the nurses nailed down the coffin. They were complimented upon their action, and one of the Guardians suggested that they should have a present for their bravery. The Chairman replied that "something would have to be done," and, with this, the subject dropped. Where was the Master of the workhouse during this incident?

A probationer recently appointed by the Bath Board of Guardians declined the office because the Board do not allow nurses to wear uniform out of the house. If a nurse provides her own outdoor dress, we think she should be allowed to wear what she pleases, whether uniform or an ordinary costume. But of course the indoor uniform which she wears in the wards should be removed. A dress worn in the streets, in omnibuses, and railway carriages cannot be regarded as hygienic or even safe in sick wards.

The death of a patient of eighty-five in the Kidderminster Workhouse from injuries sustained from a fall in one of the wards drew attention at the subsequent inquest to the fact that there was only one night nurse on duty in three hospitals for 130 patients, that the nurse was supposed to "go through" the wards several times in the night, and that there were no means of checking the visits. In reply to an inquiry from the Coroner as to whether he considered one night nurse sufficient for this number of patients in three separate hospitals, Dr. Moore said there were not many bad cases, and he should be

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