

Committee raised discussion. It referred to the appointment of a successor as Matron to Miss M'Nicol, who has resigned. The Committee recommended that the joint office of Matron and Lady Superintendent should be separated, and the latter post filled by a head nurse. Several members, however, did not favour this, as they feared it might lead to a recurrence of the friction between officials which seems to have been experienced in some of the Board's institutions hitherto. It was pointed out in support of the proposal that the two appointments would be quite independent; and the minutes were adopted. A Matron is to be advertised for at a salary of £100 per annum. An age limit of 45 is fixed; and an attempt to reduce it to 40 was defeated. It was significant that all the lady members voted for 45.

Long years of experience have proved that two independent female officers in a hospital, whose official duties are interdependent, are a mistake, and we regret that the experiment is to be tried at Barnhill. The Lady Superintendent should be chief female officer—the housekeeper responsible to her—otherwise there is always friction on the questions of cleanliness and diet.

The nurses at the Belfast Infirmary have asked for training in maternity work, and one of their supporters on the Board wisely remarked that no nurse could now consider herself thoroughly trained who had not experience in maternity nursing. We gather that the Irish Local Government Board has consented that this training shall be given to the nurses if practicable. We congratulate the Belfast Infirmary nurses upon their "inquiring minds."

There are still difficulties in defining the new nursing scheme of the North Dublin Union. When Dr. Biggar, Medical Inspector, openly protests against poor men, women, and children being subjected to the "cruelty" of the pauper attendants, it is high time to make reforms. It is a terrible condition of affairs that respectable people of the artisan class should be attended by the "lowest of the low" when there are hundreds of good women in the world willing to care for them when they are sick—if only the conditions of training and service were made possible by the Boards responsible for the management of Irish Poor Law Infirmarys. Dr. Kenny considers that the nursing staff should be increased four times, and the majority of the medical staff agree with him.

A Beautiful Reality.

We note that the Rev. William Bryant, writing in an American magazine, is very appreciative of the trained nurse.

"Strange," he writes, "that with all the credit given to humanity for helpful deeds and helpful lives, so little is ever said in the public press in praise of the unique gift of modern Christian civilisation, the trained nurse. She is a distinct product of the very best fruitage of all that is noblest and best in the efforts of Christianity to care for man in his most serious needs. For her work she is trained and prepared according to the truest scientific laws. Originally selected because of taste, temperament, physical and mental aptitude, she receives not only the finest instruction that the best professors can impart, but a practical hospital training that qualifies her to handle intelligently and tactfully the great variety of cases committed to her care. Sometimes one proves a failure, but she is weeded out or dropped by a subtle law of natural selection. Those who stand all the required tests and independently take up their chosen life profession are some of the noblest specimens of consecrated skilled womanhood that God ever gave to bless the human race. Neat and attractive in appearance and manner, firm yet gentle, they take hold of their work from their first appearance in the sickroom in a manner that inspires the most absolute confidence on the part of the patient. If he be a man, with man's natural shrinking from being cared for so entirely by a woman and a stranger, it all disappears in the absolute restfulness of having everything done so perfectly. The quiet modesty and sweet womanliness of her behaviour bring a sense of perfect contentment most favourable to recovery. Should any sudden change for the worse occur, she gives no evidence of the fact, but promptly uses those remedies which she always has at hand for such emergencies. She is never taken by surprise, never loses her presence of mind; says little, but that little always cheerfully and encouragingly. Her vigilance is seemingly constant, her resources unending. She never asks you what you want, but manages to bring just the right thing at the right time. She is a treasure whose value has no mere pecuniary compensation. She is a benediction. And yet some of us were utterly ignorant of her existence until some unlooked-for sickness placed us at her mercy. Have we described an impossible ideal? Nay, only quietly pictured a beautiful reality, for which no words of gratitude can ever convey an adequate expression.

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