

appointed for one year to act as House Surgeons in the Public Hospitals of Ireland.

ABOLITION OF UNION INFIRMARIES RECOMMENDED.

The Commissioners consider that, with improved or improving hospitals, such as Omagh, as centres in a system of County Hospitals, they would look forward to a change for the better; and, taking the county or group of counties as the area of calculation, they would expect economies of administration with more favourable results.

A COUNTY SYSTEM ADVOCATED.

As a general rule there would be a hospital wherever there is now a workhouse, but they would like to see all such hospitals cut off from any connection with Poor Law Institutions and brought into a County Hospital system, with the County Infirmary as the central institution. In that institution nurses should be trained for the County District Hospitals (now Workhouse Infirmaries). Also that at the County Hospital sufficient nurses should be maintained to supply exceptional requirements and make it unnecessary for District Hospitals to procure temporary nurses at considerable expense from a distance. Nurses would not be attached to any particular institution, but would be liable for service in any hospital in the County. It is suggested that the District Hospital Authorities should, instead of appointing nurses nominate probationers, that the probationers, after sufficient experience and instruction in the County Hospital should be sent to assist in District Hospitals. It is thought that the system of part training in two or more institutions would work most smoothly if there were an authority common to both. On passing for her certificate a probationer should be appointed a county nurse with possibly a prior agreement that she should remain in the service of the County for a stated time as nurse.

A MINIMUM STANDARD OF EFFICIENCY RECOMMENDED.

The Commissioners go on to say: "With such a system we would also expect a great improvement in County Hospitals generally—a levelling up to a high standard. At present it must be admitted that some of the County and Union Hospitals are very good, some passably good, some middling, some bad, and some very bad. A minimum standard ought to exist."

PAUPER NURSING.

"An obvious sequence of the complete separation of the Poor Law Hospitals from the Workhouse is that pauper nursing would completely disappear, and that even the discharge of menial duties by Workhouse inmates would no longer be possible. There would not be any able bodied ward in connection with the hospitals, and, therefore, the sources of supply of inmate assistants would be cut off. Those who are familiar with pauper nursing and pauper attendance will understand the benefits that would be gained by this change."

THE ISOLATION OF CONSUMPTIVE PATIENTS.

The urgent necessity for the establishment of Sanatoria for single counties or groups of counties was advocated by many witnesses, in order to deal with the disease in an effective manner. Great stress was laid on the awful ravages of the disease in particular localities; thus around Galway it is

increasing to an appalling extent. A number of consumptives return from America to die. They come home in an advanced stage of the disease and after remaining two or three months at home, where they spread the disease, usually go into hospital where they have to lie in the general wards with other patients. The Sanatoria erected should not, in the opinion of Dr. Moorhead, of Cootehill, be costly as in his judgment the disease can be stamped out in a short time if energetic measures are universally adopted.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THOROUGHLY TRAINED NURSES IN RURAL DISTRICTS.

The Commissioners further say: "In remote districts in the North-West, West, and South-West of Ireland, there are populous places that are at virtually prohibitive distances from hospital accommodation and the establishment of small cottage hospitals there seems to us to be requisite. We have in view a hospital of the simplest and least expensive kind, which would be attended by the dispensary doctor, with a fully trained nurse, of the Jubilee class, who could, when necessary, be temporarily reinforced by another nurse. We think it essential that a nurse of the first rank should be sent to such remote places in sole charge; and, in our opinion, the remarkable and unquestionable success of the Countess of Dudley's nursing system in the western parts of Ireland is due very largely to her wisdom in selecting highly-qualified nurses of experience and aptitude, with character and resource that enable them to discharge their lonely and laborious duty efficiently and with general satisfaction.

"Such a project opens up the wider anticipation that eventually the poor in every district throughout Ireland may possess the aid of a district nurse, who could in serious cases ensure that the directions of the doctor are carried out, and arrange that the best possible steps are taken when patients are not removed from their homes to hospital.

THE WORK OF VOLUNTARY NURSING ASSOCIATIONS.

"Owing to the good work done elsewhere by voluntary nursing associations, it will become a question how far public bodies, with perhaps some State assistance in very poor districts, should undertake the duty of providing for the nursing in their own homes of such sick persons as cannot, or need not, be removed to hospital. At all events, it is now generally admitted that no dispensary district ought to be left without competent midwifery attendance in addition to that of the dispensary medical doctor. Apart, however, from a provision for such midwifery duty, district nurses have not been appointed by local bodies, with the exception of an experiment in the Derry Poor-law Union, where midwives were engaged to do district nursing, but these midwives had not been trained in medical and surgical nursing. In both Lady Dudley's and the Jubilee Nursing scheme the same woman is trained nurse and midwife, and this plurality of qualifications in one person seems to be the proper and economical method of arranging for district nursing, even though there are sometimes occasions when a nurse would be disqualified from attending a maternity case owing to the septic character of another case that she might be in attendance upon."

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)