

We cannot wonder that many people desire the abolition of the poor law when we read of all that is going on in institutions under its authority. It would be quite impossible to deal with all these in detail, but we may mention a few which have come to our notice recently.

At a meeting of the Guardians of the Isle of Wight Workhouse Infirmary, the Chairman, Alderman George Fellowes, J.P., said there had been a clean sweep of the staff of the infirmary, where a disgraceful state of affairs existed, the place being a perfect pandemonium. Old bedridden patients were absolutely neglected, and the helpless creatures were found trying to feed themselves, not knowing where their mouths were. Patients were absolutely dying from neglect and starvation, vermin were all over the place, decaying food in the patients' lockers, and indescribable filth beneath the beds. He asked the Guardians to back up the new Superintendent Nurse who was acting splendidly in a very difficult situation.

At a meeting of the Bridgend and Cowbridge Board of Guardians as the House Committee had on previous occasions had to caution the Superintendent Nurse as to her conduct it was decided to warn her that if any more complaints were proved against her she would be reported to the Local Government Board. It was also decided to caution another nurse.

At a meeting of the Bakewell Guardians three visiting Guardians reported that they had found an old woman of 76 in bed with her face badly cut and bruised. The Head Nurse, Miss Dorothy Eaton, also reported Miss Shaw, infirmary attendant, for wilful neglect of duty, and said that the old woman, above mentioned, was allowed to wander from the ward into the grounds soon after 6.30 a.m. of the previous day. She met with a severe fall, cutting and bruising her face, sustaining injuries to a hand and leg, and had to be put to bed in a very collapsed condition. The patient was one needing constant attention, a fact very well known to Miss Shaw, and everyone else in the hospital.

The Visiting Committee of the Cork Board of Guardians has recently held an inquiry into a charge of neglect respecting the treatment of an infant in the "healthy nursery." The mother was admitted to the wards of the Cork District Hospital, and the infant sent to the nursery, where in nine days it became so emaciated that the father removed it, and it died a few days later. It was stated there were 87 infants in the nursery with no responsible

person in charge at night. It appears the medical officers have again and again condemned the nursery and its management, but the Board have taken no action, and the Chairman owned that by not doing so they were responsible for the deaths of hundreds of children. The medical officers have now been asked to furnish a report on the subject.

Again, at the West Riding Asylum, Wakefield, as the result of an inquest on the death of a patient—an inmate of the suicide ward—four nurses who had given evidence were re-called, and the Coroner announced the verdict, which was "That the deceased woman died from severe scalds, caused by attempting suicide, being of unsound mind, by pouring hot water on her legs from a hot water tap which should have been left locked." They added as a rider: "The four nurses who have given evidence, excluding the deputy head nurse, who are now present, are greatly to blame for carelessness, whereby the deceased was able to attempt suicide at the hot water tap in the bucket room."

Until there is a nursing department at the Local Government Board Office, under the supervision of a Matron-in-Chief, with expert trained nurses as inspectors to visit and report on the nursing departments of workhouses, and until trained nurses have that legal status which will give them a defined position, we fear the discreditable conditions in workhouse wards will not cease.

The quarterly report of the Scottish Branch of Queen Victoria's Jubilee Institute for Nurses states that during the period nine nurses completed the six months' special training, and were engaged by committees of affiliated associations at Alyth, Benbecula, Campbeltown, Glenboig, Hamilton, Johnstone, Stranraer, Troon, and Wick. The inspectors made fifty visits to nurses in local branches, and reports were forwarded to the respective local committees. The District Nursing Association established at Stranraer affiliated to the Institute, and engaged a Queen's nurse for the sick poor of the district.

Miss Dock writes from New York: "Mrs. Pankhurst is (of course) having a walk over. All the people here who think themselves so clever are silenced, and the open-minded ones are electrified by her brains, statesmanship, charm, and wonderfulness. Outside my book and writing, I am not trying to do anything except suffrage work. We are getting up steam and some day things will move. The nurses are coming over fast."

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