

in Poor Law institutions are still in such an undecided and unsatisfactory condition."

Amongst the causes of having ceased to supply nurses to Poor Law institutions the report of the Association states:—"Owing to the rapid extension of nursing in many directions we were further unable to command the type of candidate from whom we could hope for the best results after training was completed. For the same reason nurses with good training did not naturally apply to us in large numbers, as salaries in private and other nursing had considerably risen."

Meanwhile the problem of the efficient nursing of the smaller workhouse infirmaries and wards awaits solution. It is one which deserves the consideration of the President of the Local Government Board, who has proved himself on various occasions sympathetic with the claims of the sick poor, whose welfare is in his charge.

Nurses working in London and the neighbourhood in need of a rest and change during the winter months, and who are otherwise unable to obtain it, may be glad to know of Lady Henry's Recreation Home, Parkwood, Henley-on-Thames. The Home is in no sense a convalescent one, as there are no facilities for treating persons in delicate health, but it is intended to help them to recuperate from the arduous and anxious work that their calling entails. The invitation is issued for two weeks, but may be prolonged at the discretion of the Matron. During their stay in the Home the visitors are free from any expenses, except for laundry, travelling, and those of an incidental character. The fare from Paddington to Wargrave is 5s. 5d. return, and conveyance from the station to the home costs 3s. It is necessary to furnish references. Further information can be obtained from the Matron, Miss Marie Cole.

Dr. Lyster, Medical Officer for Hampshire, in a report to the County Council, complains that "unqualified practice to a certain degree appears to be carried on by grocers, who recommend and sell various patent medicines, headache powders, etc. One shopkeeper treats ulcerated legs and supplies ointment. A shoemaker is reported to make up medicines and to treat people." Further, clergymen are stated to prescribe and give medicines, and two or three lay visitors to be "virulent quacks," and nurses come in for their share of blame as offenders. A doctor was called in with an

apology by the parent for troubling him, "but the nurse was away." Again, a nurse was called to prescribe for a servant, and a doctor was asked to make up the medicine. Of course the term "nurse" at the present day has no definite meaning, and covers a multitude of sins, but we are convinced that if inquiry were made into the qualifications of the nurses who so offend not one of them would be found to be fully trained. A well trained nurse is very loyal to the medical profession, proud of her own profession, and scrupulously careful to keep within its well defined limits. "The worst sinners" are said to be the chemists, one of whom visits patients at their own homes. The danger of such unqualified treatment is demonstrated by the fact that in one instance blindness was due to delayed expert treatment. Bad results are also said to follow dental practice, and the use of local anæsthetics, by chemists.

The Committee of the Hull Corporation Hospital at a recent meeting over which Alderman F. Aske, J.P., presided, investigated statements made as to the alleged sale of sweets and other eatables to children in the hospital by members of the nursing staff. One girl who was a patient in the scarlet fever ward towards the end of last year, stated that she had bought biscuits, chocolates, and a sponge cake in the hospital. Other little girls told her that she could spend her money, and she saw two other girls buy chocolates and biscuits. She bought the articles she mentioned in the Sister's room. The Sister concerned, who was present, being asked if she had any questions to put to the girl, replied in the negative.

Other children having given similar testimony, the Sister said that she never made a secret of buying sweets and selling them to the children. She spent a great deal more money than she received. Her kindness to the children had got her into more trouble than anything else. She had never asked the Matron's permission, because she did not think she was doing wrong. The general feeling of the Committee appeared to be that there had been an error of judgment on the part of the Sister. It was resolved that it be an instruction for the future that any sales in the ward of any description should be forbidden, and that the staff should be instructed not to bring things in for patients.

Under no circumstances should the practice of selling goods to patients—adults or children—be tolerated for a moment.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)