

comradeship is substituted, which is calculated to produce good discipline and sympathetic co-operation amongst those working together for a common cause. That is the reason why the Army Nursing Reserve should be a volunteer, and not a commandeered corps.

Poor Law Nurses owe a debt of gratitude to Miss Byles, the Matron of the Lambeth Infirmary, for drawing attention to overwork and under-staffing amongst them. There is no doubt that both evils are rife in many busy infirmaries, owing to the more effective medical treatment of the patients.

In July it was recorded that, owing to complaints of overwork on the part of the nurses at the infirmary, the Lambeth Board of Guardians had decided to increase the staff. The Matron then declared that the nurses were so overworked that they were continually getting on the sick list. At the meeting of the Lambeth Board last week, however, the Local Government Board sent a letter intimating that consideration was being given to the Guardians' proposals, but reminding them that the nursing staff at the infirmary was already comparatively high in proportion to the number of inmates, and that, before allowing any substantial increase in the charge on the Common Poor Fund, they must have regard to the interests of other metropolitan unions.

We hope this does not mean that the President of the Local Government Board is going to countenance sweating and ruination of health amongst the women officials of the Government institutions for which he is responsible—now that he has been plainly told the condition of affairs. Moreover, we hope the Lambeth Board of Guardians will not be discouraged by the unsympathetic reply to their communication. Their firm support for humane conditions of work for Poor Law women workers, who are voteless and, therefore, helpless, is imperative. Mr. John Burns must be made to realise that he will not be permitted to shelve this question.

A Blue-book was issued on the 7th inst. containing the special report of the Select Committee of the Asylums Officers (Employment, Pensions and Superannuation) Bill introduced into the House of Commons by Lord Wolmer. Blue-books require some digesting. We shall, therefore, refer to the valuable information contained in the issue referred to at an early date.

Dr. Neil Macvicar, Medical Superintendent to the Victoria Hospital of the Lovedale Mission, writes from South Africa to the *Lancet*, in support of facilities for the training of native nurses. He states that, with one exception, the colonial hospital authorities have never been willing to give these nurses a trial. That one hospital has employed two, and is now wanting another.

"It is quite true," Dr. Macvicar continues, "that a native girl has a longer hill to climb than a European girl before she can become a good nurse. Her home training usually is not so good. Studying in English is also a difficulty for probationers, whose home language is not English. But some of our probationers have become very fair nurses, and in the work of nursing natives they, of course, have a great advantage over European nurses, who often cannot speak the patient's language. We are hoping to find employment for our native nurses under Lady Gladstone's District Nursing Scheme, in memory of King Edward. In this scheme, special provision is being made for this purpose. . . . One of our nurses has for several years been engaged in district nursing and her work has been favourably commented upon both by her employers (a colliery company) and by the public health authorities."

Miss G. Cowlin, trained at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, and who has done very good work there, sails at an early date for New York, where she has entered herself as a student at Teachers' College, Columbia University, for the prescribed course of study in the Hospitals' Economics' course, under the direction of Professor M. Adelaide Nutting.

Miss Cowlin's decision to avail herself of the unique educational curriculum, arranged for trained nurses at Teachers' College, proves her laudable ambition to qualify herself in the most thorough manner in the administrative and social branches of her profession. We heartily congratulate her, and have no doubt if money was available that many of her colleagues would follow her spirited example.

As soon as the Nurses' Registration Bill becomes law, the services of quite a little army of Teachers and Inspectors of Nursing will be urgently required—and to qualify for this responsible work—trained nurses, after their ward course, need just the practical and theoretical instruction at present available only at

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)