

inmates enjoying the open-air treatment. Medical and tubercular cases will receive attention in the ward. The ventilation and lighting are fashioned on the latest principles, and in boisterous weather folding doors will keep out the rain. The view from the balcony reveals a scene of the Dec which is unrivalled for its picturesqueness, and the health-laden sea breezes must have a beneficial effect upon the children.

The watchword for medicine and surgery in these days is prevention, and the preventive work done at West Kirby is invaluable. The Cripples' Ward was the first of its kind founded in any institution, and children treated there twenty years ago are now useful and self-supporting members of society. Miss A. Bryant, the enthusiastic matron, maintains her "Barts" reputation for successful management and devotion to duty.

Sir George Plunkett O'Farrell, M.A., M.D., of Oxshott, formerly of Dublin, lately Medical Inspector of Asylums in Ireland, left personal estate valued at £20,295. His will provides a contingent reversion of about £10,000 to the Irish Medical Association to form a "Sir George O'Farrell" fund for the benefit of the widows and children of medical men dying destitute.

## CHESTER INFIRMARY.

### THE NURSING DEPARTMENT REPORT.

The Board of Management of the Chester Infirmary have supplied to the governors of that institution an official record of the leading incidents leading up to the retirement of the Lady Superintendent (Miss Edith Addis), on August 5th, 1911. It contains sixteen pages of printed matter.

The record shows that last February the Bishop of Chester, who is on the Board of Management, approached the then chairman (Colonel Evans-Lloyd), with reference to certain disquieting rumours about the infirmary, and at a subsequent meeting of the Board it was decided to refer the question to a committee, consisting of the honorary medical staff, to investigate matters relating to the nursing department of the hospital, the nursing supervision, &c.; and the House Committee to conduct a thorough inquiry into the general condition of the house, &c.

#### COMMITTEE'S FINDINGS.

The Investigation Committee reported as follows: There had been a disregard of by-laws with regard to the age limit of nurses joining the staff, and summary dismissal was not contemplated by the by-laws. There were found to be insufficient grounds to justify summary dismissal, and the nurse was fully reinstated. This complaint was immediately followed by the resignation of the sister complained of. The Board pronounced the action of the nurses to be courageous

and justified. They were much impressed by the fact that such irregularities could have gone on for twelve months without official recognisance. The Board considered it unfortunate that, having regard to the numerical strength of the nursing staff, the Lady Superintendent had not a nurse available for an emergency in the Chester races week, and that, when the case was found to be urgent, steps were not taken by the Lady Superintendent to meet the difficulty. The Board considered that the Lady Superintendent's letter contained terms which should not have been used, and regretted that the right of a member of the honorary medical staff to enter the wards at any hour should ever have been questioned. The Medical Committee found that the complaints as to patients were to some extent exaggerated.

The Medical Committee reported that they considered the nursing was not in a satisfactory condition of efficiency, and that there was not sufficient personal supervision exercised by the Lady Superintendent. The House Committee found a remissness in observing by-laws; certain parts of the hospital were not as well kept as the committee would have desired; that the departments under the Lady Superintendent failed to comply with the high standard of order hospital management calls for; there was a lack of supervision, or want of supervision, on the part of the Lady Superintendent in regard to the work of the nursing and domestic departments.

Then follows the resolution of the Board requesting the Lady Superintendent to resign.

The report claims that the Lady Superintendent had every opportunity before the [committee of stating her case.

Miss Addis refused to resign, but stated on August 5th that she would take a month's holiday, and would not return.

We believe the entire management of the Chester Infirmary is vested in the hands of men—none of whom are either trained nurses or domestic experts. It is conceivable that they have done their duty in this nursing dispute to the best of their ability, but the fact remains that when it comes to questions of nursing discipline and domestic management, men have very seldom the knowledge necessary to draw clear conclusions. It is high time that women's expert work in matters of dispute in public institutions should be submitted to professional discrimination—if justice is to be done. It is quite apparent, from the report, that at Chester Infirmary the Lady Superintendent is expected to make bricks without straw.

## ROYAL SANITARY INSTITUTE.

The session at the Royal Sanitary Institute, 90, Buckingham Palace Road, S.W., opens on September 18th with courses of lectures for women health visitors and school nurses, on school hygiene; and for meat inspectors. These courses include a number of practical demonstrations and inspections.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)