

After various speakers had alluded to the shortage of nurses throughout the country,

Miss Baker expressed the view that a scheme such as now proposed would be far better than introducing girls of 18 as nurses. She could not find that there was a great shortage at any of the general hospitals. A member of the Committee of the Great Northern Hospital told her that they had no difficulty at all. Anything the Board did which was a departure from the best interests of the nursing profession would do great harm to the nursing service of the Board and of London generally.

Dr. Bousfield said there was no great difficulty in getting nurses for the asylums or children's services. (A member: "There is.") At all events the difficulty was much more acute in the hospitals service. The recent period of strain had not been without value, for it had shown that some of the arrangements made by the Board were inadequate, for instance that Joyce Green hospital had not sufficient accommodation to deal with a serious outbreak of smallpox.

Father Higley, in moving an addendum that any other means of dealing with the shortage of nurses be considered, urged that as a poor-law authority the Board ought to give an opportunity to nurses trained in poor-law infirmaries of obtaining fever experience in its hospitals. The Board once approved a motion of his that probationers in children's hospitals should be given experience in fever hospitals, but the question seemed to have been shelved.

Mr. Jackson Hunt said the matter had not been shelved; the principal medical officer advised that it was impracticable.

The whole question was then referred to the Hospitals Committee.

#### THE LONDON AMBULANCE SCHEME. NO NURSES PROVIDED FOR.

The Asylums Committee presented an elaborate scheme for the provision of an ambulance service for London, in accordance with the request of the London County Council. It was made clear that none of the vehicles or appliances of the infectious service of the Board would be employed; 18 ambulance depots would be provided so that few-traffic centres would be more than a mile from an ambulance, and 25 electric ambulances would be provided at first, to be increased afterwards to two per station. The ambulances would be in charge of two motor drivers having a knowledge of first aid, but the Committee said nothing about the provision of any nursing staff. For calling the ambulances the ordinary telephone facilities would be relied on, each ambulance station being connected with the head office by private telephone. The capital cost was estimated at approximately £18,600, and the annual cost at £17,800. It was decided to forward the scheme to the London County Council, and the Board congratulated itself that it had only taken as many days to frame these proposals as the County Council had taken years to consider the question.

## THE LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL AND NURSING.

### COLNEY HATCH ASYLUM.

#### BETTER ACCOMMODATION FOR THE NURSING STAFF.

The Asylums Committee on December 2nd, recommended the London County Council to make provision for additional accommodation for nurses at Colney Hatch Asylum. It was stated that the present accommodation was very scattered and, therefore, difficult to supervise, and in many other respects unsatisfactory. Thirty-four nurses had to sleep in seventeen rooms and others were accommodated in cubicles, the area of which was far below the minimum standard of 100 square feet provided in all new asylums in accordance with the requirements of the Commissioners in Lunacy. It was very desirable that the double-bedded rooms should be converted into rooms to be occupied each by one nurse only and that the use of the small cubicles should be discontinued. The Committee proposed that a convalescent home, no longer required for patients, should be enlarged to furnish accommodation for forty nurses. The cost of this would be £2,750.

#### REGISTRATION OF LYING-IN AND NURSING HOMES.

It having been represented that the progress through Parliament of the proposals to register lying-in homes, nursing homes and massage establishments would be hampered by making the City Corporation the authority within its own area in the case of nursing homes and massage establishments, but not in the case of lying-in homes—the arrangement hitherto contemplated—the scheme has been amended to provide for the London County Council to be the authority throughout the metropolis. In regard to the note on page 450-1 of our last issue in reference to this subject, a correspondent writes to point out that the whole object of the decision of the London County Council itself to deal with the registration of nursing homes was to dissociate the control of these establishments from the work of the borough councils under the administration of the Disorderly Houses Act. An amendment to hand over the work to the borough councils was actually moved on one occasion when the subject was under consideration, but it was carefully explained that as it was acknowledged that the majority of nursing homes were perfectly legitimate establishments they should not be classed with disorderly houses nor be dealt with by the same officials. If in spite of this, nursing homes are found, when the actual terms of the Bill are published, to be associated with disorderly houses the profession of nursing may quite fairly complain, and seek amendments in accordance with the expressed intention of the County Council. Furthermore, says our correspondent, the superintendent of a nursing home who is quoted as saying that "nothing would induce her to run the risk of police inspection" has nothing to fear on that score. It was because

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