

NURSING ECHOES.

The Barnet Board of Guardians at a recent meeting had before them a letter enclosing the resolution passed by the Matrons' Council of Great Britain and Ireland, at its meeting on October 9th, expressing its deep sorrow at the suicide of the Board's late Superintendent Nurse, and their conviction that the anomalous position of a Superintendent Nurse in relation to other Workhouse officials, as defined in the Orders of the Local Government Board, was primarily responsible for this tragedy. The Board endorsed the letter from the Matrons' Council, and sent it forward to the Local Government Board. So far so good, but a resolution from the East Finchley Ratepayers' Association, calling for an enquiry into the circumstances that resulted in the death of the Superintendent Nurse, and for the resignation of the Chairman of the House Committee, was read and laid on the table.

It costs £60 to train a village nurse for one year in Wales, £25 for four months' midwifery, and £35 for eight months' district nursing. It seems a very large expenditure. Let us hope the time is not far distant when young women will be encouraged by Welsh Nursing Associations to train for three years. We think it very unfair upon them in these days to advise any other course—especially when public money is being subscribed through the Education Department. At a meeting of the North Wales Nursing Association, the hon. secretary reported that in response to a letter sent by her to the papers drawing attention to the dearth of Welsh-speaking nurses, and asking for funds to train more candidates, she received forty-eight applications from would-be pupils. Many of these were too young, being under twenty-three, but the number who applied showed that there are many suitable young women who would gladly train were funds available. It was decided to approach the Central Midwives' Board to inquire as to whether further facilities for examinations in Welsh could be arranged for monoglot Welsh women.

Owing to the disorganized condition of nursing standards, trouble is constantly arising. Recently, at a meeting at Penzance of the West Penwith Rural District Council, the Medical Officer (Dr. Richmond) presented statements with regard to the summary dismissal of a nurse from the temporary hospital at St.

Buryan for the typhoid epidemic. It had been alleged at a previous meeting that the nurse was dismissed by the local committee because she conducted the service at the local Wesleyan Church. According to the statement by the dismissed nurse, she was discharged by the rector (Rev. A. Cornish), she had heard, because she took the service at the Wesleyan Chapel. She had yet to learn that what she did off duty had anything to do with anybody, provided it did not unfit her for her work. The statement admitted that she had failed to take a patient's temperature. The head nurse's statement alleged incompetence on the part of the discharged nurse, and said the dismissal was made on her recommendation by the local committee. She failed, the statement alleged, to take duty on the night of September 5th without legitimate reason, failed to make a night report, and neglected to take hourly temperatures. This report was signed by Drs. Jago and Nesbitt.

It would be interesting to know who engaged the nurse and upon what qualifications. We do not consider that a local committee upon which there is no expert nursing knowledge can discriminate as to a nurse's qualifications; they can know nothing of their relative value under present conditions, and a vicar should not be empowered to either engage or dismiss a professional worker.

The food of night nurses is constantly under consideration—and when there are hard and fast rules about "rations," it is often a thankless task for Stewards and Home Sisters; very few of whom are really widely conversant with dietetics. The Bolton Board of Guardians have recently had the matter under discussion, and of course came to the conclusion the rations were adequate. Maybe—but what is so often the reason for complaint is that "plenty" is not everything—quality must also be taken into consideration. "A dyspeptic Pro" writes:—"My health, and in consequence my work, has been ruined in this place by 'dollops.' Sad 'dollops' of bread, melancholy puddings, juiceless foreign meat, watery potatoes, stale vegetables. The quantity if placed in a scale indeed would be found good measure with a dump, but for all that the rations are inadequate, because they are indigestible."

The *Nursing Journal of India* announces that the Nurses of St. George's Hospital, Bombay, have a new Badge. The design is in silver, in two pieces—a miniature of St. George and the Dragon, with a plain cross beneath. It is very pretty and very unique.

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