

In due course Mr. Crooks was elected a Poor Law Guardian, and this, as he had vowed, became a work into which he threw his whole heart.

When he first entered upon it he found it bound hand and foot by red tape. The men elected by the people did not rule at all. They were little more than the servants of paid officials, whether in the person of Bumble in the workhouse or Bumble at the Local Government Board.

He had not been long in the House of Commons before his voice was heard there on behalf of the workhouse children. Not long after he made a speech on "boarding out" there was an outcry in a section of the press over an amazing example of extravagance at Poplar.

Crooks described it as "being guilty of the great crime of inserting tenders for the supply of a few pat-a-cake biscuits. 'I believe it works out at the rate of a cake for each child once a week. There's extravagance for you! Isn't it scandalous? Just imagine our kiddies in the workhouse school getting a whole pat-a-cake to eat. The youngsters lie awake at nights, wondering when their turn will come again to have a farthing pat-a-cake.'" Good old Will Crooks! We could do with many more Guardians like you!

Everybody should read this inspiring record of what it is possible to become, even amidst and in spite of the most unfavourable circumstances.

H. H.

"LEFT TO THE HOUSE."

The far-reaching Electoral Reform Bill, which deals with all the recommendations of the Speaker's Conference, was introduced in the House of Commons by Mr. Walter Long on Tuesday. Briefly the proposals are:—

Qualification for men simplified to six months' residential qualification or occupation of business premises of annual value of £10.

Enfranchisement of women at 30 years of age.

Provision for giving the vote to soldiers and sailors.

Proportional representation.

Regulation of cost of elections.

Fixing all elections on one day.

Enfranchisement of women and proportional representation left to the House.

The Government propose to take the second reading of the Bill next week.

COMING EVENTS.

May 21st-25th.—Post Graduate Week for Midwives, General Lying-in Hospital, York Rd., Lambeth, S.E.

May 23rd.—Trained Women Nurses' Friendly Society. Annual Meeting. 431, Oxford Street, London, W., 4.30 p.m.

June 7th.—Society for the State Registration of Trained Nurses. Annual Meeting. Medical Societies' Rooms, 11, Chandos Street, Cavendish Square, London, W., 4 p.m. Tea after the meeting by the kind invitation of Mrs. Walter Spencer, 2, Portland Place, W.

TENNYSON AND AMERICA.

In his youth, the poet Alfred Tennyson was a great Radical; he lived to become Poet Laureate, a Peer, and a Courtier.

The following lines to America appeared in the *Examiner*, signed "Merlin," of February 7th, 1852, and appeared in *Harper's Monthly Magazine* of December, 1903, in an article on "Tennyson's Suppressed Poems." The verses are very appropriate to the moment.

"Gigantic daughter of the West,
We drink to thee across the flood,
We know thee most, we love thee best,
For art thou not of British blood?"

Should war's mad blast again be blown,
Permit not thou the tyrant powers
To fight thy Mother here alone,
But let thy broadsides roar with ours.

O rise, our strong Atlantic sons,
When war against our freedom springs!
O speak to Europe through your guns,
They can be understood by Kings."

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

Whilst cordially inviting communications upon all subjects for these columns, we wish it to be distinctly understood that we do not in ANY WAY hold ourselves responsible for the opinions expressed by our correspondents.

NURSES DO NOT NEED CHARITY.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—Surely if trained nurses are still the hard-working self-respecting type of women they were in my active working days, they will share your feeling of indignation that without consulting the Nursing Profession at large, the College of Nursing, Ltd., has placed it in so false a position as to make a charitable appeal for trained nurses in war time, and thus degrade us in public estimation, for it is injurious to our prestige for a lay corporation to invite benevolence upon our behalf, when our only desire is to help to alleviate the suffering and misery throughout the world, to give and not to take.

Since the first days of the war this most objectionable attitude of patronage has been assumed towards the trained nurse by numberless persons, who have done nothing in the past to see that she is paid adequately for her highly-skilled services. That is where the shoe pinches. Nursing is largely a sweated calling, and now it is to be bolstered up with doles, and a hard-working body of women presented to a sentimental public in *forma pauperis*.

What for? Because a body of laymen have elected to form a company (without shares) to govern us. Presumably the fee of £1 is. they charge the nurses for useless voluntary registra-

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