

that many people were at a loss to know the meaning of orthopædic, and were under the cheerful delusion that the Institution had something to do with the Orthodox Church, whereas, etymologically, it signifies the cure of deformities in children, and as a matter of fact implies the putting right of deformed limbs of young and old—a task in which modern surgery has accomplished marvels. Persons were also apt to extend their sympathies only to the mammoth institutions, though, in his opinion, the less pretentious Hospitals were often as worthy of support.

\* \* \*

THE Worcester City and County Nursing Institution has recently started a maternity district branch at the Wychside of Malvern, owing to the indefatigable exertions of Mrs. Heywood.

\* \* \*

SURGEON PARKE, speaking at an evening meeting of the Pharmaceutical Society last week, gave a detailed description of the arrow poison employed by the Pigmies in Central Africa with such fatal results in their encounters with the Stanley Expedition. Of the men at the battle of Avu Sheba who were struck with poisoned arrows, all died except Lieutenant Stairs, whose wound was sucked by Surgeon Parke himself. The ingredients of the poison were, after much persuasion, shown to Surgeon Parke by the Mombutli woman following the expedition, who only consented to do so on condition that he alone should see them in the forest. He preserved as carefully as it was possible to do under the circumstances specimens of these ingredients, and took such notes as he was able at the time. They were reported by Mr. Holmes, curator of the society's museum, to be respectively a well-known bark used as an ordeal poison in several countries of West and Central Africa, and obtained from *Elythrophæum Guineense*; the leaf of *Palisota Barteri*; the stem of unknown species of *Combretum*; the stem of *Strychnos Icaja*, a shrub which owes its poisonous properties to strychnine; and the seed of *Tephrosia Vogelii*, a plant largely used in Central Africa as a fish-poison. Mr. Holmes hopes that it may be possible to devise an antidote more effective than that employed by the Pigmies, which consists of wood ashes and the leaves of three plants, which cannot be determined from the incomplete material brought home.

\* \* \*

To the relief of everybody concerned, the inquiry by Mr. Hedley and Dr. Bridges, inspectors of the Local Government Board, into alleged maladministration at the Eastern Fever Hospital, Homerton, has been brought to a close, and the parties concerned must now possess themselves

in patience until the two gentlemen named formulate their report. The evidence of complainants was so deprecatory of the constant supply of haddocks, that the statement of an Assistant Medical Officer that the only grumble he heard respecting the fish was from a German, who objected because he was refused a bloater for breakfast, came as a refreshing surprise. Sir John Tilley, Chairman of the Eastern Hospital Committee, maintained that the general management of the Institution under Dr. Collie was good; and he did not attach much importance to the "fish evidence" of Miss Frances West, as that young lady is the daughter of a clergyman, and therefore had been accustomed to nicer things and better food than most of the patients. But even Sir John admitted that he was unaware that the Nurses had organised a dance in the Wards on Twelfth Night last year, although the Committee had authorised a Christmas-tree.

\* \* \*

IN the Eighteenth Post-Card Examination Nurse Birrell has been selected as the successful candidate.

\* \* \*

ONCE more I make an appeal for votes on behalf of Mrs. Sarah Duyck, who is a candidate for an annuity of £20 from the British Home for Incurables. Mrs. Duyck has seven hundred and twenty-one votes to carry forward towards her seventh application on Thursday, May 14 next, and I shall be glad to receive all the assistance my readers and friends can render me, in the hope that this may prove a final appeal to their good nature in respect to this particular deserving case.

\* \* \*

AT the Select Committee of the House of Lords held on Thursday last, under the presidency of Lord Sandhurst, Mr. Stretch Dowse, examined by Lord Kimberley, stated in his evidence that:—"There were twenty-four Poor Law Infirmarys in London, containing twelve thousand and thirty-two beds, the larger number of which were perfect Hospitals in every sense of the word; the Nurses were efficient, well-trained, and highly respectable women; the medical superintendents were as a rule gentlemen of culture occupying a high professional *status*; and the Matrons were usually women of high capacity, though a woman was sometimes appointed to this post with no other recommendation than a pretty face and a good figure, and in whom a Guardian of the Poor sometimes took a particular interest. In the main these institutions were well officered and managed, but their organization might be greatly improved, and

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)