

NURSING ECHOES.

The Committee of the Royal Free Hospital has followed the example of Guy's Hospital and proposes to make a pension scheme compulsory upon probationers—as recommended by the College of Nursing, Ltd., report on Nurses' Salaries, drawn up by a Committee of which Mr. Louis Dick, the Secretary of the Royal National Pension Fund, was a member. The scheme for higher salaries and pensions will cost about £1,000 a year. The salaries of ward sisters are to be raised, according to length of service, up to a maximum of £85 per annum, and the salaries of higher nursing officials will be increased in proportion. In the case of probationers joining for four years' training the pension policy will be for not less than £25 per annum at the age of fifty. The hospital will take out the policy and pay the premium. If the nurse leaves at the end of her training the policy will be handed over to her. If she stays the hospital will continue to pay the premium subject to her being willing to take out a second policy of equal value.

The nurses contribute so materially by their private work to the finances of the Derby and Derbyshire Nursing Institution, that it is well they should participate in its financial success. At a recent meeting, at which Lord Roe presided, Mr. Hanson Sale mentioned that the sum of £6,000 had been allocated as a nucleus of a pension fund for the nurses.

Miss Robotham, in the absence of the Mayoress, distributed purses, Bibles, and badges awarded to the nurses. The recipients were Nurse Kilbourne (purse of £20), Nurses Ingram, Gray, Potter, and Blackburn.

Lord Roe was thanked for presiding, and Miss Robotham for her services, the latter paying a fine tribute to the work of the nursing profession.

Four lunatics who were found at two unlicensed houses in the West End—three in one house and one in another—figured in a case at Marylebone, when Miss Elizabeth Russell Cranford, the lady superintendent of the Nightingale Nursing Home, St. Mark's Square, Regent's Park, was fined £100, with £10 10s. costs, for offences under the Lunacy Act. The charges were that she detained, took charge of, and boarded and lodged these lunatics for payment.

Dr. Edwards found one house very poorly and the other practically unfurnished, and the four poor creatures, one aged 76 and another

80, in his opinion chronically insane.

The defendant, a nurse for 28 years, pleaded that she took the four persons into her home believing them to be of perfectly sound mind.

Much more inspection of poor old people "put away" often by relations who will not be bothered by them, is necessary. Their condition is often very pitiable.

We are asked to insert the following paragraph:—

"At the London Sessions, Mabel Bootman, a probationary nurse at the Bermondsey Infirmary, appealed against a fine of £2 imposed on her by Mr. Gill at Tower Bridge Police Court for assaulting Emily Russell, another nurse.

Miss Russell, giving evidence, said that six nurses entered her bedroom about 10.30 in the morning of April 29 and carried her into the bathroom. They put her in the bath and Miss Bootman had a jug of water in her hand. Another nurse took the jug of water and poured it over her head.

Miss Bootman denied taking any part in the "ragging," and said that she knew nothing about the plan to duck Nurse Russell.

The appeal was allowed.

If this nurse was innocent we are pleased to know her appeal has met with success; but what the public has a right to know is—have the Bermondsey Board of Guardians taken steps to protect the poor defenceless patients from the ministrations of the rowdy young women who were proved guilty of assaulting Nurse Russell, for attempting to protect sick people left in their charge? And if not, why not?

We learn that money is to be raised to provide a health nurse for every village in Sussex.

Do we understand that thoroughly trained, skilled and competent women are to be employed? A "health nurse" sounds as if the new Ministry of Health has to have something to say on the quality of service offered in rural districts. Surely the day of the makeshift—badly-equipped and very badly paid—village nurse is over. She was largely a "county" product, for which county patrons objected to pay. If the poor need nursing they need a skilled and tested attendant, and this we hope the Ministry of Health will help to provide. At present rural nursing is largely in the hands of midwives; this should now read—rural midwifery is now largely in the hands of trained nurses plus the Cert. of the C.M.B. But

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