

The Chairman reiterated: "It's a dirty thing to foul one's own nest, and it's only a dirty bird as does it." That was, he said, an axiom decent men and women take to heart.

Another Guardian who supported the Committee's Report, said that they must back up the institution and make it as popular as possible with the poor of the borough. The Inspector's Report had been circulated all over the country. There were fourteen labour members on the Board. They had done what they could to better conditions, and had increased the wages of their staff. Yet, wherever it went, it would be thought that Labour had carried on the Institution in a style which showed that they were unfit to govern. It would be made an electioneering plank. Labour could go to the electors and give proof of the result of their three years' work, and that they had raised the salaries of their staff. What was there to put up against it? Only Miss Wamsley's Report. That was the way the strings were pulled.

He was supporting the Institution. He went to dances himself, and why should not the nurses do so? They were at liberty to spend the money the Guardians [the ratepayers.—ED.] gave them as they chose.

The Chairman then put to the meeting the amendment moved by Mr. Thomas, namely to add to the Committee's Report a paragraph that the Ministry of Health should be asked not to send Miss Wamsley to the Institution again, as in that event she would not be received.

The Chairman, in counting the votes, said, "One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, and myself, that's eight," but, in spite of the strong lead from the chair, the amendment was lost. Miss Michael's amendment dropped as it had no seconder.

SUMMARY BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE VISITING COMMITTEE.

Mr. Finimore, Chairman of the Infirmary Visiting Committee, then summarised its Report, and said that Mr. Griffiths had repeated what was a libel on the greater part of the staff. The Committee did not support random statements based on some kind of hearsay, and they reiterated and were unanimous as to Clause 11 (*i.e.*, that the complaints were comparatively slight). These referred to bedsores, draw-sheets, absence of water pillows. In regard to these pillows, the Committee admitted that certain members of the administrative staff had been lax. When the nurses applied to the needle room the person in charge sometimes said they were not available. But the Matron kept a reserve stock, and these should have been obtainable.

The Committee also admitted that the draw-sheets were rough dried, and should not be supplied in this condition. They further found that these sheets were of suitable material, but that they were not properly treated. He thought it was the business of the Matron and nurses to see to these elementary things. He did not consider it in his province to turn down the bed clothes and examine the sheets.

Another item which had been referred to was the quality of the milk. When the Committee had the nurses in, one of them blurted out that the milk was not of good quality, nor was the beef tea. It was not until the nurses were up against something themselves that they heard anything of this. The milk, as sent to the wards, was quite up to the required standard. The Committee were inquiring into the matter.

All the points that Miss Wamsley had raised were going to be inquired into. They did not say the institution was perfect.

In regard to the 48 hours' week, they wanted to get the best knowledge available. They knew the defects. They did not need Miss Wamsley to tell them those. Miss Wamsley, however, did embody in her report hearsay and tittle-tattle, for which the Committee could not find any justification. He hoped the Board would accept the findings of the Committee.

Mr. Griffiths remarked that as the Committee did not directly deny Miss Wamsley's Report, it made it appear true.

The Motion for the adoption of the Infirmary Visiting Committee's Report was then put to the meeting, when there voted for the adoption 13, against 6.

CONCLUSIONS.

The points that emerge first are (1) that an Inspector is sent down by a Government Department with the object of presenting for its information a faithful Report on the matters which come under her survey, and (2) that Miss Wamsley has presented an extremely expert, useful, and dispassionate Report, (3) that the strong resentment shown by the Chairman of the Board and many of the Guardians of any criticism whatsoever deprives their opinion of the weight which would otherwise attach to it. "Its a dirty thing to foul one's own nest, and its only a dirty bird as does it," is not a sentiment which inspires one to think that the speaker has weighed evidence in a judicial spirit. Politics in regard to an impending election indeed seemed to overshadow the discussion. Labour could go to the electorate with a good account of its term of office. What was there to counteract it? Only Miss Wamsley's Report, and so the minority were accused of using it as a political weapon.

But the sick poor are not pawns in the game of politics and we are glad to know that all the Labour members did not take this view, for there was some cross-voting, but the heat engendered by the discussion could only be aroused by political or financial issues.

The paragraph in the Inspector's Report which seems to have given the greatest offence is that which states that "the nursing in some of the wards is unsatisfactory, that this supports the idea that many of the nurses think of little else but off-duty time, and money, of which there is no lack." (N.B.—Third-year probationers receive £82 18s. a year.) Further, Miss Wamsley understands that "they come on duty tired and jaded after late hours and constant excitement, and

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