

directions we should find far less friction in our Institutions than is at present the case.

THERE has been some excitement caused among the Board of Guardians of St. George's at a charge brought by the Rev. L. S. Wainwright against the medical officer of the Infirmary for having photographed, in a nude state, a female patient of weak intellect, without the consent of her relatives. The medical officer very properly explained the circumstances and affirmed that he took the photograph in the interests of science; that the patient was not mentally affected, that she was suitably attired, and that the Matron or a Nurse was present when the photograph was taken.

From the explanation given it clearly appears that the medical officer acted in the interests of science in getting the photograph of an unusual case of rickets. But the interests of the individual must not be sacrificed, and it should certainly be made the rule in all institutions that before photographing any deformity of the person of a patient, that patient, if mentally sound, should give permission; if of weak intellect that the friend's sanction should be obtained. This is a question of good faith on the part of the profession, and any breach of it is likely to injure the estimation in which Hospitals and Infirmarys are held by the public.

We come now to another aspect of the case. We hear on good authority that several of the Guardians made a great point of asking "whether any of the Nurses had copies of the photo taken," and we hear also that in the event of the question having been answered in the affirmative, those Guardians were prepared to make the incident somewhat of a "scandal." We are told that none of the Nursing staff, as a matter of fact, possessed copies of the photo, but we should like to point out, that as this photograph was shown to be one taken to illustrate a curious form of rickets, as the patient was properly covered, and therefore the photograph was merely a scientific presentment of professional interest, there was no possible reason why copies of it should not have been in the hands of every Nurse in the Infirmary.

It appears to us that a reflection has been made on the Nurses, when it is even hinted that there could be anything unsuitable or "improper" in the possession by them of a photograph of a case of clinical interest. The Nurse of to-day, by her method of training, is expected to take a professional interest in the cases coming under her notice, and for this end

she is taught as much of anatomy and physiology as will enable her to do so, and it would certainly appear to us that the suggestion made by the gentlemen of the Board of Guardians of St. George's, that the possession of a photograph of a surgical character could militate against the delicacy and pure-mindedness of the Nursing staff, comes very near being an insult to that staff; and it shows also that they have not grasped the rudimentary fact that women—in common with men—can acquire an intimate knowledge of the human body without at the same time feeling any self-consciousness with regard to it. If this element of what is really impure-mindedness were allowed to grow up in our Hospitals, work between the Nursing and medical staffs would become impossible. The particular Guardians who tried to introduce this unpleasant flavour into the discussion of the photograph incident must be reminded that "To the pure, all things"—be they professional or otherwise—"may be pure."

An interesting discussion recently took place in our columns as to whether Nurses "should be" or "should not be" possessed of political predilections. Views were given on both sides favourable and unfavourable. But all will be agreed after reading the case at Ashton-on-Mersey, in which Nurse Frances Nicholls was charged with committing the offence of personation of a voter at the election of District Councillors, on June 15th last, that a Nurse should not enter a polling booth and record a vote to which she is not entitled. The defence went to show that the Nurse's knowledge of the rights of voters was somewhat vague, and this ignorance has placed her in a very uncomfortable position.

The defendant was engaged as district Nurse, and came to reside at the Nursing Institution at Ashton in October last, succeeding Nurse Martindale, a lady whose views on the duties of citizenship had induced her to place her name on the register. On the date when the voting offence took place Nurse Nicholls had been away superintending some Nursing in the district. On approaching her house she saw two men in conversation, one of whom, a man named Kenyon, came up to her and asked her "if she was Miss Martindale, as they wanted

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