

Miss Sanders : Yes.

The Chairman : Then we must proceed to elect another. (Miss Sanders withdrew).

Mr. Plumptre suggested that they should ascertain if the other Nurses were of like opinion before proceeding further.

The Chairman : No, take the vote.

Mr. Burridge : Having elected this young woman nurse is there no way of meeting her ?

The Chairman : No, she has declined to act.

Mr. Formby : There can be no question that what she says is perfectly true.

The Chairman : I can't be interrupted.

The election proceeded again. After recording his vote, Dr. Ley left the room. On returning, Denton having received most votes, Dr. Ley said : Denton will not take the appointment.

The Chairman : Then the other will be elected.

Dr. Ley : I am not so sure. She has not yet seen the house.

At the suggestion of Mr. Plumptre both Nurses were ordered to be called in.

The Chairman thought it very wrong that a member of the board should alone interview a candidate.

Dr. Ley : I had voted and had a perfect right to speak to her.

The Chairman : No.

Miss Denton said she could not take the appointment with only one assistant.

The Chairman asked Miss Kift if she was willing.

Miss Kift replied that she should like to visit the house before saying.

The Chairman : We will give you half an hour.

Applicants for the post of Assistant Nurse were called in.

The Chairman (to Miss Thompson) : Are you prepared to take the post ?

Miss Thompson : No sir, not at all (laughter). It is impossible for one—

The Chairman : That will do.

A Member : She is a lady (applause).

The Chairman said some members exhibited exceedingly bad taste in clapping because a person declined office. He could not understand such behaviour, and was sorry guardians, who had been there so long, could exhibit so much personal feeling against himself.

The Chairman, while waiting for the next candidate to appear, remarked that he did not know whether Guardians at the bottom of the room were sober or not.

Mr. Shea : I didn't catch that.

The Chairman repeated the sentence.

Mr. Shea : I would rather you applied that to yourself (applause, and 'We have had enough of him this morning').

Miss Wrench, it was announced, was not present, and Miss Hughes was called for.

Mr. Burridge : If she refuses the appointment, will you allow the Guardians to hear why ?

The Chairman : Yes.

Mr. Snow : Thank you very much.

The Chairman : I think you will regret this conduct, Mr. Snow, and if you don't you ought to.

Miss Hughes appeared.

The Chairman asked if she was prepared to take the place ?—Miss Hughes : I have been over the house, and I don't think I could possibly do the work. It is such a rambling place.

The Chairman : Will you try ?—Miss Hughes said she would, but she could not come for six weeks.—The Chairman : Very good.

Mr. Vicary asked what they were to do for six weeks ?—The Chairman : Get assistance, I suppose.

The Master (Mr. Cawse) said Miss Wills (temporary Nurse) would stay on, but Mrs. Hawkrigge wanted to go. He would try to get another in her place.—Miss Hughes was then elected Assistant Nurse.

Miss Kift presently returned from her tour round the house.

The Chairman : Can you take the place ?—Miss Kift : I could not take it. I could not do the work.

The Chairman : Will you try ?—Miss Kift : I don't know. Would you be willing to give me another assistant ?—The Chairman : Yes we will meet your views.—Miss Kift said under those circumstances she would try.

Mr. Formby told the Chairman he might have given the other Nurses the same opportunity.

The Chairman : You must not interrupt. I am astonished at such conduct, coming from a person calling himself a gentleman (disorder).

Mr. Formby retorted that he should not ask the Chairman to say whether he was a gentleman or not.

The Chairman : You have no right to interfere, and I am afraid you don't know what you are talking about. I am sorry Miss Kift should have seen such an exhibition (laughter).

Miss Kift said she could come in a month, and the Chairman declared her elected.

Members, rising excitedly : What ! declared her elected without putting it to the meeting !—Great excitement followed. Half the members rose to their feet before Miss Kift got out of the room, protesting against the Chairman's conduct.

The Chairman : The motion is passed ("No"). The protests continuing, the Chairman excitedly shouted that "the board will now adjourn," and then, darting out of his chair, and dashing his pen on the table, hurriedly left the room and the workhouse, amid shouts and uproar.

Mr. Heath called on the guardians to be men. They knew the chairman was irritable, and they should not torment him. They should give him due respect. He thought Mr. Formby was out of order. No doubt the chairman had been using strong words, but they should try to uphold him as well as possible. If the chairman was wrong, they should not go wrong. It was unfair for gentlemen to hoot the chairman of the room.

The Rev. O. H. Cary (Trusham) moved that Mr. Scratton take the chair, but Mr. Heath continued to speak.

Mr. Formby asked the board to consider that the two first Nurses were not given the same offer that the last was.

Mr. Tripe called attention to the fact that no one was in the chair.

Mr. Scratton was invited to preside, but he declined.

Mr. G. Stooke said the business of the board was at an end.

Mr. Marshall : Follow my example, and withdraw.

Rev. O. H. Cary proposed a private meeting for the purpose of drawing up a protest against the action of the chairman ("yes" and "no").

Dr. Ley thought they ought to bring the chairman's conduct to the notice of the Local Government Board.

Members gathered about in little groups discussing the situation, and quiet was not restored until Mr. Scratton took the chair, and proceeded with the rural sanitary business.

Earlier in the meeting the following notice of motion had been handed in :—'That in the opinion of this board, the chairman has by his conduct on recent occasions forfeited the confidence of the members, and it is desirable, in order to prevent further unpleasantness, and for the general well-being of the board, that he be called upon to resign.'

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)