

creased the nursing staff sufficiently, and said that according to the late Dr. Patterson they were adequately equipped to meet any emergencies. The question arose as to whether they should engage any pauper labour. He held the opinion that such labour should be utilised where it was practicable, and so long as it could be used to advantage. (Hear, hear). He contended that if twenty Nurses had been on duty in the establishment they could not have prevented the two accidents of last week occurring. He was quite of the opinion that pauper assistance should be requisitioned to a certain extent. He moved that the whole question be relegated to the Investigation Committee.—The Chairman pointed out that pauper help when used was not used indiscriminately. The matter had been overstretched by the press and others. Even the man who was in charge of Cole, the patient who committed suicide, was put down as a poor, worn-out old fellow, when the fact was he was almost as strong as an ordinary artisan, was only forty years of age, was suffering from bronchitis, and was equal to doing any little job. The whole thing had been exaggerated. He was of the opinion that these unfortunate occurrences had not taken place through the nursing staff being insufficient.—Mr. Gartside seconded Mr. Horrobin's motion.—Mr. Simister said he wished to enter his protest against the impression which was being so industriously circulated that the Board was not capable of properly conducting the affairs of that institution. The Coroner apparently claimed to be the censor of the public authorities of that borough. Of course he might be justified in expressing opinions, but it was certain that the members of that Board could completely refute any insinuations which the Coroner attempted to cast upon them. He would like to point out that Dr. Downes's report received full consideration at the time it was made, with the result that six Probationers were engaged. Whatever had occurred during the last few days would, he contended, have occurred no matter what the arrangements in regard to the nursing had been. (Hear, hear). The Guardians came there week after week doing their duty without even a hint as to any remuneration; they did that duty for the love of the cause and for public good, and he thought it was grossly unfair that they as a Board should be attacked in the manner in which they had been by the public press of this country. It was all very well for an official with a high salary to criticise those who did public work without expecting any remuneration for services rendered. He considered that the Guardians ought at least to have credit for what they did, and not be held up to public contempt as they had been. (Hear, hear).—Dr. Graham asked what length of time Nurse Wallace was on duty on the night when the atropine was administered? The Chairman replied that her hours were from eight to eight except on two nights a week, when the hours were from ten to eight. She did not get any relief during those periods.—Dr. Graham remarked that in his opinion such hours were altogether too long for any Nurse. He had read the comments on the cases in the papers, and he had come to the conclusion that they were overdrawn. Still, he believed the Nurses were overworked. He regretted very much, as, no doubt, every member of the Board regretted, that three untimely deaths should have occurred in the Workhouse in so short a period. One was the case of a child which was "overlaid," and he regretted that the recommendations of the Coroner with regard to the provision of infant cribs had not been carried out. They must look upon public opinion as an important factor, and they must look upon the opinion of such a gentleman as the Oldham Coroner as being some guide to them in the discharge of their duties. There was no doubt that the nursing staff was inadequate; and whilst they were on that subject he would like to suggest the advisability of securing the services of a Male Nurse in connection with the Infirmary. (Hear, hear). To do justice to the poor sick people who perforce had to resort to that institution was to his mind far more important than a mere question of economy. Then, again, overworked people had not that mental activity

and freshness of a person who was not overworked, and they were bound to make mistakes. With regard to the jurors' recommendations regarding the use of differently coloured and differently shaped bottles for poisons, he thought there should be no two opinions.—The Chairman said he quite agreed with the medical officer in his proposal to change the Nurses in turn from day to night duty, and *vice versa*.—Mr. Horrobin considered the recommendation of the Coroner with regard to providing cribs for infants was unnecessary. No cribs were used in thousands of houses.—Mr. Jonathan Wild said in the case where the Coroner made this particular recommendation there were some very suspicious circumstances, and the Coroner ought never to have made the remarks he did. "The Coroner," he concluded, "should be very careful what he says in regard to the Oldham Board of Guardians; we are as honest, true, and straightforward as he is."—The resolution that the whole matter be referred to the Investigation Committee was carried unanimously, and the subject then dropped.

We give this account in full, to show the difficulties which arise in attempting to deal with the nursing of the sick where there is no female expert—that is to say, no trained Nurse—in charge of the Nursing department; and we are strongly of the opinion which we have expressed on several previous occasions in these columns, that no real and permanent improvement will ever be effected in the management of our Workhouses until they have been organized on the lines of other public institutions, and persons of refinement and of education replace the illiterate "Master and Matron," who are to-day endowed with so much power and influence in our Workhouses, and whose gross ignorance and resulting autocracy is the real barrier to progress, discipline and efficiency. Why should not a gentleman be placed at the head of a Workhouse, and a gentlewoman at the head of the Workhouse Infirmary? No other system will ever explode the abuses of "Bumbledom."

### Nursing Schemes.

We refer in another column, this week, to the following new suggestions to which our attention has been called.

#### "NURSING SCHOLARSHIPS SCHEME."

1. Four Scholarships to be established, to be called Lindsey Nursing Scholarships.
2. Candidates for these Scholarships to be not under 25 nor over 35 years of age, and to be resident in the County of the Parts of Lindsey.
3. The names of candidates to be submitted to the Lincolnshire Rural Nursing Association, the Association undertaking to select the four most suitable candidates.
4. The four selected candidates to attend for not exceeding one month as Probationers at the Lincoln District Nurses' Institute, in Lincoln, their fees being paid by the County Council.

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