

was held last week, the very important recommendations regarding the Nursing Department, to which we recently alluded at considerable length, were finally accepted by the Governors unanimously. We earnestly congratulate the authorities on this decision, and do not doubt that Addenbrooke's will now take the position to which it is so well entitled, in the first rank of Nurse Training Schools in the United Kingdom.

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At a late meeting of the Lewisham Guardians the Clerk read the following letter, addressed to himself, in reference to the Local Government Board inquiry into the suspension of the Matron of the Infirmary (Miss Pattison):—

Local Government Board, Whitehall, S.W.,
2nd February, 1895.

SIR,—The Local Government Board have received from their inspector, Dr. Downes, the report of the official inquiry held by him respecting the suspension of Miss Pattison from the discharge of her duties as Matron of the Infirmary of Lewisham Union, together with a copy of the evidence of the witnesses examined at the inquiry. The Board have given careful consideration to the evidence and to the report, and have been unable to avoid the conclusion that both the medical superintendent and the matron have been to blame for much that has occurred, although if the blame is to be apportioned between the two officers the greater share would attach to the matron. The Board think that Miss Pattison was especially indiscreet in transferring nurses from an erysipelas ward to general wards on two occasions without having previously consulted the medical superintendent. Upon a review of the whole case, however, it appears to the Board that the questions which the inspector was called upon to deal with at the inquiry were of so trivial and petty a nature that it would be unreasonable to suppose that they could form causes of permanent disagreement between officers, the record of whose services has hitherto been of so satisfactory a character. They have, therefore, determined to defer their decision in the case for a period of six months, removing in the meantime the matron's suspension, and allowing her to resume her duties. The Board trust that this course may result in a good understanding being established between these officers, but at the same time they think it right to state that a good administration of the institution cannot be allowed to suffer from want of harmony amongst the officers, and that if further cause for complaint arises the officer who is shown to be in default cannot be allowed any longer to retain office. The Board think it right to add that they have observed with regret evidence of want of courtesy on the part of the steward towards the matron, and they request that he may be cautioned as to his future conduct in this respect. The "Matron's Report Book to the Medical Superintendent," which was put in at the inquiry, is returned herewith.—I am, sir, your obedient servant,

W. E. KNOLLYS, Assistant Secretary.

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It was inevitable that such a report would satisfy no one, and the Guardians are already protesting against its decisions. The local press are strong in condemnation of the fact that the authorities at Whitehall have not gauged the significance of the lack of harmony between the Medical Superintendent and the Matron. We are in sympathy with the lay

press in this matter, and must repeat what we have previously stated, that it is useless to cry "peace, peace, where there is no peace." No harmony can exist, no discipline can be maintained, and no permanent improvement can take place in the organisation of our Poor Law Infirmarys until the Local Government Board appreciates its duty to the domestic and Nursing department, by making the Matron responsible for its efficiency. It is not only unwise but demoralising to place the domestic management and the female staff under the autocratic control of a man.

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Nothing can be more gratifying to those ladies who, possessing their souls in patience, are acting as Matrons in our Poor Law Infirmarys, and doing their duty under most disheartening circumstances, than to feel that their devoted labours are gaining the appreciation and support of their subordinate officers. The following letter, signed by fifteen of the staff of the Lewisham Infirmary and addressed to the Guardians must be exceedingly gratifying to Miss Pattison, and we feel sure that all true Nurses will re-echo the sentiments of their colleagues at Lewisham, "that the patients ought to come first."

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To the Chairman of the Lewisham Board of Guardians.

SIR,—We, the nurses of the Lewisham Union Infirmary, wish it to be distinctly understood that we deeply and heartily sympathise with our matron in the unpleasant circumstances in which she has been placed, and we desire to show our loyalty to her by stating that she has always been most kind and ready to listen to any request or communication from us, and any change that should cause her resignation would be most extremely distasteful to us. We also wish to ask you if we might continue to work with the timetable and rules that we agreed to when we were elected, with two exceptions, that of a night off once a month for the night nurses instead of once in two months, and that the fortnightly leave from 2 to 8 should be extended for two hours, until 10 p.m. Our reason for objecting to this new time-table is that we do not consider that the patients *can* be properly attended to by those on duty when so much long leave is given, and we feel as nurses that the patients ought to come first.—We beg to remain your obedient servants, &c.

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It is to be regretted that the Committee of the Royal County Hospital at Winchester have not exonerated their management by a public statement concerning the resignation of the late Matron, Mrs. Suckling. Reports are being widely circulated which are far from satisfactory concerning the lax administration of the Nursing Department by those entrusted with the expenditure of public funds, and we hope, for the sake of the institution, that a full and satisfactory report will be presented to the governors by the House Committee.

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