

ignored. The Matron then demanded the testimonials before July 1st. Such unbusiness-like proceedings in neglecting to answer her letters spoke for itself, she wrote. If the letters were not returned she would take other steps to secure them. The Clerk then replied in an extraordinary letter, the opening sentence of which was, 'Don't be rude; I have had more important business to attend to,' and called her attention to a previous letter, intimating that original testimonials were not returned during service. The Matron then made a request in her weekly report that the Board should instruct their Clerk to return the documents or supply her with certified copies before the date mentioned.

The reading of the report and letters caused a wild sensation.

Mr. Lile said that the Clerk deserved a vote of censure in sending such a letter to an official of equal standing. (Uproar.)

Mr. R. Evans (with warmth): The Clerk should tell the Board where the rudeness comes in. (A member: 'She was threatening him,' and cheers.) No, she was not. What made the incident more regrettable was that the letter would be embalmed and handed down to posterity in the records.

Mr. Lile: Then I shall move that the letter be erased from our records, and the Matron so informed (Cheers and counter cheers.)

Mr. Pitman seconded.

Mr. Lindsay said they were getting to second childhood's days again in taking up sides in an official quarrel.

Mr. White remarked that such an expression should never have been used by a gentleman to a lady.

The Clerk (who had been persistent in his interruptions during the debate): She's an official!

A suggestion was now made that the Clerk should be given an opportunity to withdraw the letter, but he curtly declined the offer, and a general uproar ensued upon the Clerk reading some letters from the Matron on other subjects to prove that she had sent improper and 'insulting' answers to his letters.

Mr. Lile: I do not see anything insulting in them. (Oh!)

A motion for the next business was defeated, and Mr. Lile's motion was carried by 28 votes to 7. A further motion was agreed to that copies of the testimonials be sent to the Matron.

The Clerk: I can't do it by the 1st July. (Oh.) I have too much work to do.

Mr. Hadden: Mr. Crane does not improve his position. I am really shocked at him! Let him send out immediately to one of his juniors to get it done at once.

The Clerk (sarcastically): And if I find it necessary, employ extra labour! (Uproar.)

Mr. Hadden: You are trifling with the Board. If this sort of thing is to be allowed to continue either Mr. Crane or some of us will have to leave the Board altogether.

Mr. Lobb: He's getting demoralised. He's learning it from the Board. (Laughter.)

The matter then dropped.

We are not surprised to learn, as we go to press, that Miss Warburton has obtained another post. The announcement of this will be found in another column. We imagine that the Guardians of the Bow Infirmary will change their matron somewhat frequently, unless the Local Government Board steps in, and insists

upon this official being treated with the consideration and respect which is due to her position. In passing we may remark that it seems to us an extraordinary arrangement that the original testimonials of the matron of an institution should be retained by the clerk so long as she holds the appointment.

We congratulate the Rev. E. C. Jervis on his courage in going straight to the Local Government Board concerning the abuses he has witnessed at Beckham Workhouse. The *Cromer Post* reports that an inquiry into the nurse question was held before the ordinary business of the Erpingham Board of Guardians could be proceeded with. At the previous meeting of the Board a letter published in the *Cromer and North Walsham Post* and written by the Rev. E. C. Jervis under the heading, "Unpleasantness at the Workhouse," and which contained certain statements to which the Board took exception, was read. They were to the effect that "the nurse had been persecuted and slandered in a wretchedly mean and cowardly manner." The Board then determined to ask the rev. gentleman to attend and either substantiate the charges contained therein or publicly withdraw the same.

A long and exhaustive enquiry ensued, the discussion lasting some four and a-half hours. The Rev. E. C. Jervis said that the letter contained no charges on his part, but simply statements made about matters which had come under his notice. He had not gone ferreting about, but he was simply stating facts, and he had brought forward these irregularities after the nurse had apparently been refused an opportunity to do so herself. He had been told that he was an enemy in the camp for trying to put matters straight. The speaker also referred to slanderous aspersions made on him by certain members of the Board, for which he said they would have to answer elsewhere. He asked how was he to comfort the poor old people, knowing the afflictions from which they were suffering were not of God's will, but were caused through the neglect of officials of the House. He urged that the master and matron had done anything but their duty, and that the food supplied to the inmates of the Infirmary was hardly fit for a healthy person to eat. He also stated from his own knowledge that pails full of food had to be carried to the pigs, the sick people of the Infirmary being altogether unable to eat the same.

In conclusion, he urged that under the circumstances he was justified in the course he had taken in the matter, for he had written to the Local Government Board thinking that they fixed the diet, while he wrote to the *Post* hoping thus publicly to bring the matter up.

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