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Editorial.

THE CARE OF THE INSANE.

THE tragedy at the Crumpsall Workhouse, where an unfortunate patient was done to death by his male attendant, brings into prominence once again the unsatisfactory conditions under which lunatics are placed in many of our workhouses, and the urgent need of reform in their care, for it is indisputable that thousands of such patients receive no trained nursing, as nursing is now understood, and that dozens of these sufferers die annually from neglect, even if they are not brutally killed as was the poor paralytic patient, Southgate, by his inhuman male attendant, Pescott. The facts of this case, as brought to light at Pescott's trial, expose the present terrible conditions under which pauper inmates are incarcerated in Workhouse Wards, and cry aloud for immediate reform. Here we have evidence of over 100 lunatics, some of a mild character, and some acutely excited, all placed under the charge at night of *one* male attendant! These poor creatures are therefore absolutely at the mercy of one untrained man, and that he should bang them about and finally strangle one of them with a towel, when

enraged by their condition, comes as no surprise to those who have studied this side of the mental nursing question. It was the knowledge of the almost barbarous methods employed in dealing with the pauper insane in workhouses, of the stamp of men employed as attendants, and the horrors of the whole system, which aroused such a wave of indignation in the Royal British Nurses' Association, when the Hon. Officers thrust through a servile Council the now notorious resolution, which still unrescinded disgraces its minutes, "That they (lunatic attendants) shall be subject to the same rules and regulations as the other nurses, and have the same status in the Association"!! Sir James Crichton Browne and his colleagues who supported him in this deliberate attempt to depreciate the professional status of trained nurses and to retard reforms in the nursing of the insane, have never yet dared to carry out their threat to admit untrained lunatic attendants to the Trained Nurses' Association. Had they done so, there is no reason why the name of the criminal Pescott, now serving his very inadequate term of seven years penal servitude for manslaughter, should not have been found amongst the names of the Chartered Corporation of Trained Nurses!

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)