

Secondly, it would appear from Mr. Stoehr's letter to the *Daily Chronicle*, that the boy would not have been brought back to the Hospital at all, but for his own thirst for knowledge, which is highly commendable. The assistant house-surgeon "examined the eye, and was of opinion that, with so little external sign of injury, and the eyeball being intact, it was unlikely that the deep parts could be affected, but," say Mr. Stoehr, "wishing to watch the case carefully, I asked the boy's parents to bring him up next day."

Another point to which we should like to draw attention is the fact that, according to the press report, Mr. Stoehr was throughout the proceedings at the Coroner's inquest on the case spoken of as possessing the degree of M.D. According to the report, Dr. R. T. Fitzhugh, the assistant house-surgeon, gave as the reason for the parents being kept waiting an hour-and-a-quarter, that "the boy had to see a Dr. Stoehr, that gentleman having an appointment with him." In reply to a question of the Coroner as to the whereabouts of Dr. Stoehr, Dr. Fitzhugh replied he had "gone for his holidays that afternoon." Mr. Stoehr himself candidly informs the *Daily Chronicle*, "being an unqualified student, I was not summoned to the inquest." So far as Mr. Stoehr is concerned, he has explained his position most lucidly; but we think some further explanation is necessary from the authorities of Guy's Hospital.

The rôle played by Dr. Fitzhugh throughout, scarcely seems to have been a happy one. We conclude he was not the assistant house-surgeon referred to by Mr. Stoehr, who saw the boy on Friday, the 12th, as he says he saw the deceased first on Saturday. But at that time "the boy was perspiring freely, and was very limp"; Dr. Fitzhugh spoke to him, but "could get no reply," and there was the history of the injury to the eye. Dr. Fitzhugh, however, told the Coroner that he thought "it was a good thing the boy was kept waiting, because he might have been sent out." It was "only by the fit that he recognised the gravity of the case." Possibly by the time matters had arrived at that stage, even the unqualified father and mother might have done the same.

This case, following so closely, as it does, upon that of the carman which we reported last week, seems to need some explanation from the Governors of Guy's Hospital.

AN IMPORTANT DECISION.

AN important decision has recently been made by the Local Government Board in a case under dispute between the Loughrea Guardians, County Galway, and their work-house medical officer, D. P. O'Donoghue. The doctor had applied to the Guardians for the appointment of a trained nurse for the infirmary, an application which the Guardians considered it unnecessary to grant. Within the last six weeks an operation case of a critical nature was treated in the Infirmary, and, the case being urgent, Dr. O'Donoghue at once procured the services of a trained nurse from Dublin, who, as there was no accommodation for her in the house, had to stay at the hotel. Her expenses there came to five guineas, and with her salary the bill for her services, including hotel expenses, came to £9 13s. Dr. O'Donoghue accordingly presented this bill to the Guardians, who ordered the doctor to pay the five guineas himself, on the ground that he should first have consulted them. They further, by fourteen votes to two, passed the following vote of censure:—

"That this board disapproves of the action of the medical officer in directing the Master to send to the Nursing Institute, Dublin, for a 'special' nurse, thus causing considerable expense to the ratepayers, as they consider there was no necessity for ordering a 'special' nurse, without first reporting the circumstances of the case to the Board of Guardians at their weekly meeting."

To this, Dr. O'Donoghue replied as follows:—

"Sir,—I have with great equanimity received your copy of the vote of censure passed on me for having, under pressure of the sealed order of the Local Government Board of the 9th September, 1897, applied for a 'trained' nurse—not a 'special' nurse, as stated. I am glad that all the neglect and extravagance were at the expense of the guardians. Their neglect to provide accommodation added the hotel bill, the major part of the £9 13s., which neglect still continues, the trained nurse appointed having even yet to reside out of the hospital in the matron's quarters.—I am, etc., P. O'DONOGHUE, M.D."

The Local Government Board have directed the Guardians to pay the five guinea hotel expenses, and approved of the action of Dr. O'Donoghue. They have informed the Guardians that it was the duty of the medical officer to obtain the nurse, and that their vote of censure was not deserved.

The decision is, in our opinion, a most satisfactory one. It is quite obvious that when it is necessary to perform immediately a critical operation, the patient must be provided with adequate nursing without waiting for a meeting of a Board of Guardians.

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