

work. On the ground floor, besides the Superintendent's sitting room, nurses' sitting room, dining room, box room, and kitchen, is the "District Room," which is a luxury highly appreciated by the nurses. In it are pegs for cloaks and bonnets, a rack for boots and slippers, rails for drying wet cloaks (for the nurses are out in all weathers, and it is not always summer), cupboards for ointments and lotions, etc., for appliances, and for clothing given for the use of the patients. Here, also, is a deep porcelain sink, fitted with hot and cold water, in which appliances which have been lent out can be cleansed and disinfected on their being returned. In the small yard attached is accommodation for housing and cleaning the bicycles, those now indispensable items of a District Nurses' outfit. Each nurse rejoices in the possession of her own bedroom (of which there are eight), a possession always dearly prized by those whose lives are lived in public.

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We congratulate the Governors of the Royal Albert Edward Infirmary, Wigan, upon their common sense, in defeating the resolution at a recent meeting by 60 votes to 10, to institute new officials, *i.e.*, lady visitors—considering the work which the advocates of the scheme propose that they should do

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IN moving the resolution, Mr. E. Walkden asked, "What is the work of a house visitor? It was to go through the wards, see that everything was clean and in good order, and examine the fabric. What he wanted to lay stress upon was that they would see the patients were well attended to and kindly treated by the nurses. If those patients had any complaint they should make it to the visitors, and of course they knew how it would be attended to then. That was certainly a new order of things, and it was simply because there was a demand for it. He did not think it was the business of a man to go into the women's wards, because he did not think anyone would say a man could get a proper version of a complaint from a woman, particularly in the predicament in which they were at the Infirmary. The person who could get a complaint from a woman was another woman, and that was the reason of the resolution. He did not want it to be thought he had any complaint against the officials or the nurses in the Infirmary. He was pleased to say he did not think it was possible to have a better or more kindly lot of nurses. That being so, he was not at all wanting to upset anything they did. He wanted to have something like fair play for the women as they had for the men."

MR. JOSEPH PARKINSON, in seconding the resolution, said "he wanted to respect the feelings of the working classes, who contributed largely to the Institution, and to his mind, by allowing a few female visitors, not for the purpose of making complaints, which was not the intention, but to make proper suggestions, would be an advantage to the Infirmary. Some people thought it would interfere with the *esprit de corps*. He was in favour of discipline, and if the thing was worked on proper lines the *esprit de corps* would be maintained. He did not want to interfere with the nurses, the Matron, or the doctors, but if they permitted a small number of lady visitors not to go round making complaints, but to satisfy themselves of the satisfactory condition of things in the house, they would be doing the proper thing."

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WE have, on more than one occasion, spoken plainly on this question in this journal, and we fear no contradiction from hospital managers when we repeat that nothing could be more pernicious, or more subversive of discipline, than this system of espionage upon the part of persons who are not legally appointed Managers of the Institution; and when it comes to proposing that women of the working classes should be empowered to visit the wards and patients "to see that everything is clean and in good order and to examine the fabric," one is tempted to ask, where are women of this class to gain the expert knowledge to qualify them to form an opinion? The large majority have not the slightest idea of the very elements of hygiene, and the majority are far too lazy to keep themselves and their homes clean and tidy—to say nothing of hospitals.

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THE whole suggestion is founded on fallacy, and could have but one result—the complete disorganization of the domestic management of the institution. We are advocates, of course, of women working side by side with men on official Boards of Management of Hospitals and Infirmarys, but only picked women should be elected to such positions of responsibility, and the responsibility should be complete. To a member of the Board of Management the medical and nursing officials naturally look for help, counsel and sympathy; but from the amateur detective lady visitor, medical men and trained nurses will beg respectfully to be delivered.

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WE believe it was at this very Hospital, some time ago, that, having politely shown a contingent of working men and women round its wards, the nursing officer who accompanied them was offered a tip of five shillings "for her trouble."

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