

*The Lewisham Workhouse Case.*

The result of the Local Government Board inquiry in the Lewisham alleged workhouse scandal is on the whole eminently satisfactory. The Board do indeed find that indiscreet and improper observations were made in Mariano Williams's presence by the superintendent of casual wards, the male attendant, and the master of the workhouse; that there was unexplained delay in providing him with the special diet prescribed by the medical officer, and that he was detained for an undue period in the receiving ward without the supervision of a paid officer. But in regard to all the main charges against the Guardians and workhouse authorities, the report of the Local Government Board is a verdict of complete acquittal. They hold that the medical officers acted with *bonâ fide* and professional discretion in arriving at the conclusion that Williams was of unsound mind and had suicidal tendencies; that no complaint can be made as to the manner in which his removal to the asylum was effected; that his location in the same ward with Fox was necessitated by the want of adequate accommodation, and that Fox was not a raving maniac, but was already in a state of coma at the time of Williams's admission, although liable to convulsive seizures which might cause commotion. These findings show how much foundation there was for the indictment presented against the Lewisham Guardians, and accepted in certain quarters, whenever it was presented, with a settled determination to treat its formulation and proof as one and the same thing, and with an exuberance of invective which would scarcely have been justified if Williams had been a latter day Norris. There is nothing that the more emotional section of the British Press and public find half so attractive as a lunacy scare.

(See further under "Notes and News.")

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