

CORK DISTRICT LUNATIC ASYLUM
PLANS.

THE dispute in reference to the claims of the architect in the above matter is still unsettled. At the last monthly meeting of the board the following proceedings took place:—

The chairman read a letter from Messrs. Gregg, solicitors, informing the board that Mr. Atkins, architect, had instructed them to take proceedings against the board for the recovery of the amount of his demand.

The Chairman—Mr. Copinger is here, and I shall hand him this letter.

Mr. MacCarthy, M.P., said it was unfortunate they should be obliged to drift into a law-suit on this matter. He was not fortunate enough to hold the same views with the other members of the board on the subject, but he would ask them to pause before they declined the offer of arbitration. It appeared to him that Mr. Atkins, who was an old officer of the board and an artist of distinguished eminence, had been treated somewhat harshly; but whether that view was right or wrong, his professional advisers offer to refer it to arbitration was worthy of consideration.

Sir George Colthurst—Have we any offer from Mr. Atkins to refer the matter to arbitration?

Mr. MacCarthy—Yes, he wrote a formal letter to that effect.

Mr. Copinger, in reply to the chairman, said there was a letter from Mr. Atkins suggesting that it should be left to scientific men. This matter was discussed by the house committee on several occasions, and they took a great deal of trouble in it. Mr. Atkins was tendered what they considered was more than he was entitled to—namely, £300; and the committee were of opinion that arbitration, as proposed by Mr. Atkins, ought not to have been entered into. He thought it would be much better that the subject were discussed in private, as there was a probability of its coming before the courts.

Mr. Murray, without wanting to prejudice the case, asked if there were not certain conditions that shackled the committee against accepting the offer of arbitration?

Mr. Copinger said there were, and it was utterly impracticable after the resolution come to by the board.

Mr. French—Are you prepared to make a proposition?

Mr. MacCarthy—I have no concern in this matter except as a governor; but I may say frankly that Mr. Atkins called upon me and said he was quite prepared to submit it to the arbitration of two architects, mutually chosen.

Mr. Copinger— I beg your pardon. There are questions here that are more for ordinary men than for scientific men.

Sir George Colthurst objected to have it left to the arbitration of men of Mr. Atkins own standing.

Mr. French suggested it should be left to commercial men, with power to examine architects.

After some further discussion it was agreed to hand the letter of Messrs. Gregg to the solicitor of the board, Mr. Copinger; and if in the meantime a proposal of arbitration were made, that the board would consider it.

We repeat what we have already said—that Mr. Atkins' fair claim should be settled. If the case be tried by a court of law, the board are certain to come out of the matter second best.

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