

Queen in Council has given the members of the Corporation power to hold general meetings from time to time as they consider necessary, and further that such special general meetings may be obtained in any one of three ways—by order of the President, by a Resolution of the Executive Committee, or by a Requisition signed by fifty members. If, then, the President orders, or the Executive Committee resolves, or fifty members requisition, that such a meeting should be held, it is, undoubtedly, contrary to the powers conferred upon the Corporation by the Privy Council that such a meeting should not be held. The words of the Bye-law, furthermore, are that these meetings “may be summoned at such times and places as may be considered suitable in each instance,” the clear meaning of which is, that “the time and place” is to be Ordered by the President or Resolved by the Executive Committee, or Requested by the fifty signatories. In other words, the President or the Executive Committee or the Requisitionists are to state the TIME AND PLACE WHICH THEY CONSIDER SUITABLE IN EACH INSTANCE. The words admit of no other possible interpretation; but the claim has been gravely advanced that the Executive Committee not only has the authority to say what time and place is considered “suitable” by the Requisitionists, and therefore presumably also by the President, for meetings which they respectively request or order, but also that the Executive Committee has the authority, if it pleases to do so, to “postpone,” or in other words TO REFUSE, the convening of such a general meeting of the members. Now if the Committee have this power—which is not apparent—with regard to the Requisition signed by fifty members, it clearly has the power also to override the Order of the President—which in this matter is, according to the Bye-law, strictly on a par with the rights of the Requisitionists. In other words, the Executive Committee, if their contention is correct, have the power to say that a meeting ordered by the President shall not be convened, or that it should be “postponed” to some other season which they consider more suitable. That this is an indefensible assumption of authority is proved by the fact that IT CONTRAVENES THE CHARTER which says that “THE PRESIDENT SHALL HAVE POWER TO SUMMON MEETINGS OF THE CORPORATION AT ANY TIME SHE MAY THINK FIT SO TO DO.” It, therefore, follows that as the Executive Committee clearly have no power to dispute the Order of the President in this respect, they also act unconstitutionally if they attempt to override the privileges given in the same clause of the Bye-law, and under the same conditions, to fifty Requisitionists.

Eminent Counsel, indeed, to whom this point has been referred, have given it as their deliberate opinion that the Executive Committee in postponing—that is to say, in refusing—the Special general meeting of the Corporation formally requisitioned by sixty-nine members on February 28, HAVE COMMITTED A VIOLATION OF THE RIGHTS OF THE MEMBERS OF THE CORPORATION. This is a matter of such vital importance to the members that it must at the earliest possible moment be set right. And it will be advisable, therefore, that a New Bye-law should be made defining strictly the powers of the Executive Committee in this matter. It is not too much to say that the Executive Committee have by this action raised the question of their own authority in the most crucial manner, and if the Committee were permitted to assume the right not only of overriding the Bye-laws and Charter, but also of rendering null and void the powers and privileges conferred upon the members, the Corporation would be reduced to a condition of impotence—a state of affairs unequalled in any other corporation in this country.

The only Bye-law in this connection, to which attention need now be drawn, is that numbered 3, Section C, and which reads as follows: “No Resolution shall be proposed at any Annual or Special general meeting unless the full text of the Resolution shall have been sent in writing, and by Registered letter, to the Secretary, at least three weeks previously, for insertion upon the Agenda of the said meeting.” The object and the usefulness of this provision is manifest: It prevents any important matter being sprung upon a meeting without due and sufficient notice having been given to all the members, and it also tends to prevent the introduction of matters at a general meeting of the Corporation, the full meaning and purport of which have not been previously comprehended by the members.

Lectures on Elementary Physiology in relation to Medical Nursing.

BY BEDFORD FENWICK, M.D.

Physician to The Hospital for Women, Soho Square.

(Continued from page 500.)

WHERE are certain chemical processes which are essential to Life, and which must be understood before it is possible that the various processes of health and of disease can be comprehended. Probably, the most important of these is that which is known as *oxidation*, which in brief means the union of oxygen from the air with other chemical sub-

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)