

were employed by their superior officers for the fulfilment of private ends. He could not discuss the proposed new Bye-laws, because they were still confidential, but certain very objectionable features would have to be removed from them. They had been drafted by the officials alone, and if they were not altered very considerably from what they were now there was no prospect of anything but continued and increasing warfare in the Association. (Applause and counter-applause.)

Mr. PICKERING PICK said he did not wish to detain them, but he rose in consequence of a remark of Dr. Woods, who said he had never heard it contradicted that at an informal meeting a promise was made that all complaints should be redressed. He (Mr. Pick), therefore, rose to make that contradiction now. The meeting was held at his (Mr. Pick's) house, and the letters of invitation were written by himself. They were merely written to a few members in order that they might discuss the question, and see whether some solution could not be found of the difficulties under which the Association was labouring. At that meeting, no promise was made beyond the promise of some of the members that they would do their best to revise the Bye-laws, and it was distinctly stated that that promise was only made by them as *private* individuals; that the meeting was an informal one, and that they could not bind any of the other members of the Association, or those of the Executive Committee. (Applause.)

Dr. BEDFORD FENWICK :—I am very glad to hear this contradiction from Mr. Pick, and to say that I feel sure that a large number of members have a great respect for Mr. Pick. When he has been in the chair the meetings have been conducted with fairness, and in a business-like way; and, whatever Mr. Pick has done in conjunction with the other officials, one always feels that when he has publicly come in contact with the members he has treated them fairly. That is such an unusual thing for the officials to do that we are only too glad to recognise it, and I am therefore glad to thank Mr. Pick for the contradiction he has made. The meeting to which he refers *was* a private one, but there were a large number of representative members at it. The *results* of that meeting have never been contradicted. The chief result was that twelve matrons of leading hospitals who went into that room determined to express their views publicly at the annual meeting, came out of that room believing that they had gained all they wanted—the redress of their grievances—and, therefore, the notices which had been given, or were about to be given, of motions at the annual meeting were withdrawn or were not sent in. Those twelve matrons came out of that room believing, at any rate, that there was no necessity for them to do anything more. That was the impression of those twelve ladies. How it was derived, I will not say, but the effects of that impression were very great, and very beneficial to the officials. I pass on to the remarkable statement that has been laid before this meeting. Certain statements have been made by the Incorporated Medical Practitioners' Association in very definite and formulated charges, and others also by a number of leading matrons who are members of the Association. Those charges are described by Mr. Fardon as "vague and intemperate." It would be interesting if Mr. Fardon would point to the charges which he considers "vague," and would read to us those which he considered

"intemperate." We have had our experience in the meetings of the Association of what most people would call "intemperate." "Infamous and Blackguardly," for example, would be held by most people to be intemperate. In my humble judgment, those statements are definite. They allege that the officials are mis-managing the Association; that the funds of the Association are not being used for the benefit of the members; that nothing is being done for the members; and that the Association is being made dependent upon charitable assistance in a manner of which many members do not approve, as they believe that the Association ought to be able, as it used to do, to pay its own working expenses. The whole origin of the trouble in this Association is connected with Dr. Bezly Thorne. He was the author of the suggestion that the matrons who had founded the Association, who had been promised permanent seats, should be removed from the General Council (Cheers). That appeared to many to be a deliberate breach of faith, and I note that the supporters of the officials applaud it. In the first Bye-laws, that position had been given to the matrons in black and white and could not be challenged. In the subsequent Bye-laws—framed after the Charter was granted—that provision was not made expressly clear, and therefore it could be challenged, and I do not say that it was not right to raise that question, if there was any doubt concerning it. But I do say this: that the official who discussed it in October, 1894, and who discussed it with more than one person, should have brought the matter before the Executive Committee, of which he was an official; that he should have said, "according to this mistake in the Bye-laws we are obliged to break faith with the founders of the Association; let us correct this mistake at once." I say, that is what Dr. Bezly Thorne should have done. But he took no steps till February, 1895, and immediately after he brought the matter to the notice of the Committee, 69 members petitioned for a general meeting to change the Bye-law, to preserve the good faith of the Association with its founders, and to keep those ladies upon the governing body. And it has been shown to you this afternoon that it is absolutely essential to the welfare of the Association that the leaders of the Nurses' Training Schools should be in sympathy, should have confidence in, and should work, with the Association. That meeting was requisitioned for, in due legal form. The requisition came before the Executive Committee and—I am not going into any debatable subject—I will only state what cannot be contradicted—that requisition was ignored. The meeting was not held, and in consequence, the mistake in the Bye-laws could not be altered, and, in consequence, the matrons were compelled in 1895 to retire from the General Council. Now, those are absolutely indisputable facts, and I do not want to go outside them. I say that the good faith of the Association could have been saved, and it was broken; and, for my part, I do not blame the matrons who felt aggrieved at such an extraordinary betrayal. The matrons who might have been placed back upon that General Council are not there to-day. I will not ask why. They have withdrawn their support from the Association; they have declined to take any further part in it. I have received within the last few days, letters from several matrons of very important county hospitals, stating that they absolutely decline to attend any more meetings of the Royal

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