

gress, and—with his assumption of personal interest in our welfare, while he grasps all power, prevents liberty of speech and conscience by intimidating the weak, bribes by professional patronage the unscrupulous, and thrusts out illegally the independent and strong members from Council and Executive—he is the real enemy we have to fight. Secure in the votes of nurses working in wards in hospitals and private institutions under his personal patronage, he has so far pursued his tyrannous and repressive policy unchecked, so that he imagines he has only to thrust upon us new Bye-laws, making legal his past illegality, and the voice of protest will be hushed for ever. We differ from this opinion, and can only refer our readers to the study of those forces of which the British character is composed. The history of a thousand years teaches us that the part played by a minority, inspired by a sense of justice and a love of liberty, which has faced, fought, and defeated every attempt to crush out those feelings, has made us this day the freest, and therefore the strongest, nation under the sun.

As to the interview with Mr. Fardon we will only quote and disprove some of his statements. He is reported to have said in answer to the following question:

“By admitting the matrons you necessarily lessen the power of the medical men?”

“I deny that the medical men have any preponderating power on the Association. We are there, as I have before explained, in the interests of the nurses. The interests of nurses and doctors are the same, and the Nurses' Association has everything to gain by the co-operation of the medical profession. I am aware there is a small faction which is for ever bringing ridiculous charges against us, as to wishing to run the Association, and as to being connected with it for private ends. All that is too silly to be seriously discussed. If they really believe medical men are running the Association now, their fears should at once be dispelled when the new Bye-laws come into operation; for then the doctors will be completely outnumbered by the matrons.”

PREPONDERATING POWER OF MEDICAL MEN.

(1) There are *thirty-five* medical Vice-Presidents, all of whom have votes on the governing body—the General Council—eighteen of whom live in London, and can therefore attend and vote whenever they choose. There is not one nurse vice-president!

(2) There are *four* medical men as hon. officers, all of whom are *ex officio* members of committees. There are only *two* nurse hon. officers, one of whom has ceased to attend the meetings of the Executive!

(3) There are *one* hundred medical men on the General Council of the Association, as against two hundred nurses, but of these sixty-two medical men live in London, whilst only twenty matrons belong to Metropolitan institutions; and of the seventy-five nurses who are resident in London, thirty-three belong in the past or present to the Middlesex Hospital, Chelsea Infirmary, and the Chartered Nurses' Society—all being therefore more or less absolutely under official influence.

(4) On the Executive Committee there are twenty-three medical men, *twenty-one* of whom are resident in London; and only twenty-one nurses, *sixteen* only of whom are resident in London; so that the medical preponderance is absolute even without the indisputable fact that West End medical men are at liberty to attend meetings at their own convenience, while matrons and nurses can only do so if their official duties do not intervene.

(5) The Sub-Committees are mostly composed of double the number of medical men than nurses. For instance, our journal is so edited that the title *Middlesex Magazine* would be eminently more descriptive than *Nurses' (?) Journal*. Miss Thorold, and Drs. Fardon, Coupland, and Wethered, of the Middlesex Hospital, with the aid of Mr. Langton, Dr. Bezly Thorne, and *one* matron, are reported to constitute the Journal Sub-Committee.

(6) The Registration Board is composed of *fourteen* medical men and *eleven* matrons, and so on *ad infinitum*.

So that Mr. Fardon's denial “that the medical men have any preponderating power on the Association” is untrue. It remains a fact that they can, and do, outvote the nurses on the governing bodies of their own Association in spite of his denial.

And now, for the latter part of Mr. Fardon's statement: “If they, the nurses, really believe that medical men are running the Association now, their fears should be dispelled when the new Bye-laws come into operation, for then the doctors will be completely outnumbered by the matrons.” This statement will be found to be entirely untrue when the proposed new Bye-laws are published.

It is now widely reported that a most dangerous system of government has been suggested by the Hon. Officers, and is embodied in the new Bye-laws. For example, it is said that they propose to reduce the matrons' and nurses' representation on the General Council from 200 to 60 seats (!); that the matrons of the great Training Schools are deprived of

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)