

these proposed new Bye-Laws have been compiled without my sanction. I should like to say that I have known of them from the very beginning, and I entirely approve of them. I will now ask Sir Dyce Duckworth to take the Chair.

Mr. Fardon, the Medical Honorary Secretary, made a long statement.

Making reference to the recent action of a number of nurses, who had attacked the officials of the Association and the manner in which they had conducted the affairs of the Association. He said there was no truth whatever in the charges that had been made. The officials of the Association had done their duty all along, and were not going to be drawn by the taunts and allegations which had been made by a few irresponsible members of the Society. Certain medical men had been accused of conspiring to rob the nurses of their rights, but such was not and never had been the case. It was absolutely absurd, and no one would more cheerfully resign their positions than the medical men if the nurses could govern the Association themselves.

Dr. Bedford Fenwick, whose speech was much interrupted, said Mr. Fardon had made statements to the meeting which were untrue and misleading, especially with regard to the management of the Association. He pointed out, amid disorder, the fact that the Nurses' Associations in the Colonies had refused to associate themselves with the Association in England because of the manner in which the English Association was governed.

Sir J. Crichton Browne suggested that Dr. Fenwick should bring his grievances before them in the form of a Motion or Amendment. He did not know the action of the Association affected the Colonial nurses.

Dr. Fenwick said Sir J. Crichton Browne would not have challenged him if he had not known that he stood absolutely alone in that Council, inasmuch as the officials had carefully eliminated every medical man, matron, and nurse from the Council who had objected to their proceedings, and would have removed him also had he not been a Vice-President.

The Chairman then put the new Bye-Laws *seriatim*, and they were all agreed to without any attempt at discussion. On the motion of Mr. Langton, the whole of the draft Bye-Laws were then adopted *en bloc*, with one dissident.

The proceedings then terminated.

It is noteworthy that although the proposed Bye-Laws entirely reconstruct and alter the previous existing constitution of the Corporation, and, amongst the drastic changes, deprive the Matrons of the leading Training Schools of their *ex-officio* seats on the Executive Committee, not one question of any sort was asked by any nurse member present. In fact, the whole of the Bye-Laws suggested by the Honorary Officers were, of course, passed without question by Mr. Fardon's docile nominees.

## Nursing Politics in America.

THROUGH all the reactionary policy, and miserable attempt to prevent free co-operation amongst British Nurses by the present Honorary Officers of the Royal British Nurses' Association, the progressive work of our American and Canadian colleagues shines hopefully. What the majority of Englishwomen, in spite of our boasted superiority, have failed to do—remain true to themselves and their profession through this dark period of intimidation—our Sisters of the New World are doing, and God be praised for it! That their own time of trial is at hand, the tone of the American nursing and medical press clearly denotes. But human liberty, hardly won in the New World, is a great and much prized jewel, and we have no fear that the women of America and Canada, if tempted to betray their profession, will fail their sex. The horrible treachery to sex, and to the sacred cause of friendship, which this struggle for professional liberty of conscience upon the part of British Nurses has exposed, is the most heartrending feature of the whole fight; and, indeed, Sir James Crichton Browne has shown himself astute in his statement, made in our hearing, "That women are incapable of co-operation, and will always be found to sell one another"; which brings us back to the terrible fact that woman's economic dependence, for generations, has developed in her the characteristics of the slave—cowardice and treachery—and these are the qualities which are being freely utilized in our Association to keep those members in thralldom who have, and will continue to claim, liberty of conscience.

The one woman who stands out in the nursing political arena in America as a born leader of women is Isabel Hampton Robb, the late superintendent of the Johns Hopkins' Nurse Training School at Baltimore, now the wife of Dr. Robb, of Cleveland, Ohio. This lady is a British subject—being by birth a Canadian—and it is to her original brain and organizing ability that the nursing profession in the States and Canada owe the basis of an organization for trained nurses, which, with natural growth, will give them professional independence, liberty of conscience, and power to work out their own salvation. Mrs. Robb is in every sense a strong woman, full of human sympathy and self-respect, and we have no hesitation in stating that she is recognized amongst her colleagues in the States and Canada as a safe and sure leader. The following letter, which appears under the heading of "English Tendencies" in this month's *Trained Nurse*, is, therefore, of immense significance; in all combats, it is inevitable that the mud reaches those in the front ranks of the battle:—

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