

ANYWAY, members of the Executive Committee know no more of Mr. Fardon's nominee than Dame Rumour chooses to vouchsafe. So the reports that Miss G. A. Leigh is a voluntary worker in our office, that she holds another official position, that her qualification for the position of Secretary to "the scum of the Nursing profession" is "like that of her predecessor," that "she has done a little work for Sir Henry Burdett," in whose paper the members of the Royal British Nurses' Association were formerly vilified week by week, must all be taken "with a grain of salt."

BUT we must advise the officials that they are not acting with discretion in opening registered letters addressed to the members of the Royal British Nurses' Association in General Meeting assembled, and withholding those letters from the persons to whom they legally belonged.

BOBADIL v. BALDERDASH.

MR. BRUDENELL-CARTER'S propensity for personal attacks is well known to the members of the Royal British Nurses' Association, especially if they can be made in the security of the Executive Committee, or in our officials' "official organ," which admits false statements made by one member concerning another, and "suppresses" the reply of the member attacked!

WE are not surprised, therefore, to read in the *Medical Times* that—

"A meeting of the South-West London Medical Society was held on Wednesday evening last, at Stanley's Restaurant, Lavender Hill, at which there was a full attendance of members and visitors to hear Mr. Brudenell-Carter's answer to Mr. Victor Horsley's address to the same Society, on the 8th ult. Mr. Brudenell-Carter's ostensible subject was "Legislation as a Remedy for Medical Grievances," but the real topic was Mr. Horsley, and the address will long be remembered as one of the most bitter attacks by one public man upon another which has ever been made. So eager was the speaker to discredit his antagonist, that he went so far as to let his audience into the secrets of some of the proceedings of the Council *in camera*. Of this opening, Mr. Horsley, who was fortunately able to be present, was not slow to take advantage, and his reply, whilst excellent in tone and temper, under provocation of no ordinary magnitude, was effective and crushing."

REFERENCE to this episode would be unnecessary if it were not for a few reasons which those who run may read. The present quarrel concerns the powers and actions of the General Medical Council. Mr. Carter, of course, standing for official autocracy and obstruction, and Mr. Victor Horsley, as a Direct Representative on the Council, for progress and reform. Mr. Carter stated that "the Council ought not to be a prosecuting body; it only met twice a year, and,

irrespective of hotel and travelling expenses of the members not resident in London, the proceedings cost £37 10s. an hour!! Prosecutions ought to be undertaken by the police authorities, who were the proper people to do moral scavenging of this kind." If the General Medical Council cannot protect the interests of the medical profession, even at £37 10s. an hour, it would be interesting to know at what price the *non possumus* nominees of the corporation are prepared to do their duty!

AGAIN, Mr. Carter accused Mr. Victor Horsley of disparaging his profession. He said "the public had come to look upon eminent physicians who had received honours at the hands of their Sovereign as men who represented all that was best in the profession which they adorned, but Mr. Horsley looked upon them as subjects for vituperation."

THE truth is, that, as Mr. Horsley explained, he had thought fit to make comments upon the action of the President of the General Medical Council, who had acted in an unconstitutional manner in refusing to call the Penal Cases Committee to deal with cases to which he drew attention. The President has, moreover, acted improperly by not only refusing to carry out this constitutional measure, but had actually written to him (Mr. Horsley) asking him to "forego his right to address him personally."

AGAIN, Mr. Carter and Mr. Horsley are at variance concerning the ability of their Standing Counsel, Mr. Muir Mackenzie—the gentleman who also "counsels" the Royal British Nurses' Association—and is, therefore, presumably responsible for the new and most remarkable code of Bye-Laws. Mr. Carter "thought it impossible to exaggerate the depth of gratitude which the Council owed to its legal advisers." No doubt! But Mr. Horsley thought otherwise, and said: "after arguing a point, and asking Mr. Mackenzie if he agreed, Mr. Mackenzie replied 'not in my opinion.' Of course he did, he replied that to everything he (Mr. Horsley) brought forward, and he (Mr. Mackenzie) was defeated on every single point by the Council itself!"

So that the rebellious members of the Royal British Nurses' Association, who on numerous occasions have contested Mr. Muir Mackenzie's ruling—notably in the attempt to remove the *ex-officio* Matrons from the Executive Committee, and in the famous "Barlow case" in which he was proved in error—may take heart of grace, and so may Mr. Victor Horsley. Officialdom and Bumbledom are out of date, and although they die hard, they are bound to go under.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)