

after she had been elected a member. I do not want to quibble whether she was refused her paper or whether the Secretary "postponed" giving it to her. I say she went and asked for a privilege and a right, and she left the office without it.

Dr. WETHERED: Dr. Bedford Fenwick read just now Miss Barlow's letter. May I ask him to read the termination, namely, the date?

Dr. BEDFORD FENWICK: That is my first point—allow me to finish one point at a time—that she called at the office on the 12th. At the bottom of this letter appears (for the sake of perfect truthfulness) the date which appeared in the NURSING RECORD (June 8th), and then the gentleman who has called attention to the fact will find there is also a footnote at the bottom which also appeared the following week in the NURSING RECORD pointing out that June 8th was a printer's error.

The CHAIRMAN: Would Dr. Fenwick read that footnote?

Dr. BEDFORD FENWICK: "This date was a printer's error, noted and corrected in the next issue of the NURSING RECORD (page 452) as follows: 'By a printer's error the date of a communication printed in our last issue, viz., June 8th, 1895, was transposed and attached to another communication written on the 12th instant.'" Now I should like to remind that gentleman that in this letter Miss Barlow said: "As I am anxious to replace the names of the *ex-officio* Matrons on the list, I made a personal application at the office for my voting paper." Now, I do not give Miss Barlow the credit of having prophetic powers, and I do not for a moment believe that on the 8th June she could really prophesy that she called at the office on the 12th June. That fact was correct; and when she states in a letter she has called at the office one infers that she had called at the office before she wrote the letter—a fact proved by the sworn affidavit of our Secretary. I think that is sufficient on that point, Sir. Now I pass on to what happened. The letter appeared in the NURSING RECORD of June 15th, and on the same date a letter was written by Messrs. Lewis and Lewis demanding a retraction from this Nurse of statements made reflecting on Miss Ravenhill. Messrs. Lewis and Lewis are a firm whose reputation it is unnecessary to say a word about, and who are not in the habit of writing *billets doux*. (Laughter.) The Nurse felt it her duty to hand that letter to her solicitors, and they, of course, took charge of it. She heard nothing further about that letter, but I am informed on the best authority that as soon as the Nurse received her voting paper she was prepared at once to write to the NURSING RECORD, and say that she had received her voting paper. But when this letter came in her lawyers naturally enough said: "You must do nothing. Messrs. Lewis and Lewis do not write letters like this without reason; we do not know what is behind, and you must do nothing. You must write no letters; you must leave it in our hands." Otherwise the Nurse would have written and said: "I wrote last week that I had not received my voting paper. I write this week to say that I received it after the last issue of the NURSING RECORD was printed and published." But the Nurse's hands were immediately tied. Now, Sir, before that had quite calmed down, the Executive Committee held a special meeting, and here we have an opportunity of testing the exact truthfulness of the statements made to us by a curious fact to which, I think, the meeting will give attention,

A specially summoned meeting was held, and at that meeting the following Resolution was passed, and which once again Mr. Fardon would not communicate to this meeting:—"That the Honorary Officers write to Miss Georgina E. Barlow requesting her to show good reason why she wrote such a letter, and requiring an ample apology for the same, or otherwise, in accordance with bye-law, Section G 2, she would be summoned to appear before a special meeting of the Executive Committee, who have power to direct that the name of a Nurse be erased from the Register if, after full inquiry, she be considered unworthy to remain thereon." Now, barring the threats, Sir, and barring the fact that the Executive Committee immediately prejudged this Nurse, and demanded not only an explanation but an apology—an explanation and apology in the same breath—which was as much as saying that she was guilty at once—I say barring that, the resolution was a perfectly worthy and right one. The Nurse had written a letter complaining of mismanagement; it was the duty of the Executive Committee to enquire into that, and I consider that that resolution, with some alteration, was all right. But that resolution was never sent to the Nurse—in defiance of all principles of English justice. She never heard of that resolution; it was kept back from her—no one can deny it. She never heard of it until the case came on for trial, and what did they do instead? Instead of sending her that resolution, and saying, "We demand an explanation and apology, otherwise we shall proceed against you," they send her a letter about which there cannot be two opinions, and which I have asked in vain to have read. I am sorry, once more, to have to read it myself: "Madam, the Executive Committee of the Royal British Nurses' Association, having taken into consideration the letter which appeared over your signature in the NURSING RECORD of the 15th inst. [this is dated the 28th of June], have instructed us to inform you that they have decided to proceed against you in relation thereto in accordance with the powers conferred upon them in the following terms;" and then the Bye-law giving the Executive Committee power to strike off from the Register the name of any Nurse set forth at length.

Dr. BEZLY THORNE: Please to read the bye-law.

Dr. BEDFORD FENWICK: It was the duty of the Medical Honorary Secretary to have read this.

Dr. BEZLY THORNE: I think it would have been fairer, as it is part of the letter. I think you are bound to.

Dr. BEDFORD FENWICK: I shall be pleased to do so. I shall have to refer to it again—"The Executive Committee shall have the power to direct that the name of any Nurse who shall, after full inquiry, appear to a majority of two-thirds of a meeting of the Committee unworthy to remain thereon, be erased from the list. But no name shall be erased for this cause except by order of a meeting specially summoned to consider the matter, and at this meeting fifteen, shall be the necessary quorum. Provided, always, that any Nurse whose name it is proposed to remove shall have the right to appear in person or by proxy to show cause why such erasure shall not be made, and shall, moreover, have the right to demand that before her name is erased the matter shall be referred to a meeting of the General Council, whose decision shall be final." That is the quotation from the bye-law. Then the letter goes on, "We are

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