

this room, to remove her name from the Register if they think fit, and by so doing to put a slur upon her professional position which she could never get over—they are empowered to do that, and they are empowered by Royal Charter to do that under certain bye-laws and regulations. They threatened to do that to Miss Barlow. They gave her solicitors notice that they intended to do that; and then, when they come before the Courts, they say they never intended to erase her name or to hold any meeting to erase her name. It is impossible to make too strong a comment upon such proceedings. Why did not they say what they meant, in common fairness, to the Nurse last July? Why did not they say, "We do not intend to remove your name"? They said nothing. They let it go on until it came before the Court; and then they made no defence; they said simply, "We never intended to do it. It is all a mistake. Here is our resolution asking for an explanation and apology. We never intended to erase Nurse Barlow's name, or to hold any meeting to erase her name." The only question which remained was as to costs—which side was in the wrong. That was the only question the Judge had to settle; and, in a most carefully delivered judgment, going into all the facts of the case, he held—

The CHAIRMAN: You said that it was a decision as to which side was in the wrong?

Dr. BEDFORD FENWICK: Most decidedly.

The CHAIRMAN: That is not so. Costs were not given on that ground; they were given because Miss Barlow was entitled to apply (applause), and the Judge, in giving costs, twice expressed his extreme regret that he was technically compelled to do so.

Dr. BEDFORD FENWICK: Nothing has astounded me more than to find that some Nurses are apparently supporting this resolution against one of their colleagues. May I read, sir, to you the judgment?

The CHAIRMAN: By all means. Silence!

Dr. BEDFORD FENWICK: "I confess I am most unwilling to visit the costs of this application upon the defendants, but I cannot see my way to the contrary. I think they have been most unfortunate in the course which they have pursued." ("Hear, hear," and applause.) At the end of the judgment, after going through all the details, the Judge said: "I very much regret the result, but it seems to me, under these circumstances, she is entitled to come to this Court for some relief." ("Hear, hear.") The relief she had obtained; namely, that the threat meant nothing. ("No.")

The CHAIRMAN: There was no decision given upon the issue.—None.

Dr. BEDFORD FENWICK: What the threat would have meant if she had not taken legal proceedings remains an open question. There is not the slightest doubt as to the power of the Executive Committee to take proceedings against any Nurse. The only thing we demand is that that Nurse shall have fair play. (Loud applause.) We demand, as a matter of British justice, that the Nurse shall be heard, that fair play and justice shall be given to her before her case is decided. The High Court of Chancery has taken up that position, and on that ground the Judge awarded this Nurse costs. You cannot go behind that, and that is why I object totally to this Resolution which has been sent out. No word of the facts I have brought out have gone to the members of the Association. The matter came before the General Council at its last meeting,

and discussion was prevented; the General Council, as the governing body, is the last Court of Appeal of this Association, and when it came to discuss the matter, the matter was prevented from being discussed. The rights and wrongs of the case were never allowed to be put before the governing body of the Corporation.

The CHAIRMAN: I cannot allow you to say that the General Council is the last Court of Appeal.

Dr. BEDFORD FENWICK: Shall I read the Charter?

The CHAIRMAN: I know the words, but it is one of those very unfortunate expressions in the bye-laws for which you are mainly responsible. May I point out this, that had the Council arrived at any decision of this kind, it would have been quite competent for any General Meeting of this Association to turn out of office the members of the Council. The final Court of Appeal is this Association, of which Her Royal Highness is President.

A MEMBER: I rise to a point of order; is it not a fact that the Chairman of a meeting such as this should be perfectly impartial? (Loud and continued applause.)

The CHAIRMAN: The Chairman must correct obviously erroneous statements which are being made.

Dr. BEDFORD FENWICK: I have not the pleasure of knowing this gentleman; but I venture to thank him, and, Sir, I would call his especial attention to the fact that you have stated that the words to which I referred were from the bye-laws. I am sorry, Sir, to have to inform this meeting that you are in error, and that the words to which I referred as from the Charter, are from the Charter; and I venture to inform this meeting that the Charter was drafted by some of the ablest gentlemen at the Bar, and that the words of the Charter—not the bye-laws—are these: "The ultimate decision on any matter affecting the Corporation shall rest with the General Council." Those are the words approved by Her Majesty's Privy Council, and by Her Majesty in Council. They are not in the bye-laws. (Applause.) I return, Sir, to my point, and I say that the General Council, the Governing Body, has had no opportunity of expressing its views upon the rights and wrongs of this question. Now, a resolution has been sent out all over the world to 3,000 people condemning this Nurse—condemning her unheard, a thoroughly un-English proceeding ("Shame" and "Hear, hear"), and a proceeding, Sir, which I do not believe the English people, with its innate love of justice, will for a moment approve. The resolution that has gone out all over the world to Nurses who have known nothing whatever about the case, who are not told that Miss Barlow has been justified in a Court of Law, who are not told that she has succeeded in a Court of Law—(I will use those words)—who know nothing at all about the circumstances, the resolution has gone out to them condemning her as disloyal and her action as unjustifiable. I defy Mr. Fardon, who says there is no condemnation in this resolution, to say that it is not condemnatory of Miss G. E. Barlow. (Cries of "Hear, hear.") I have had to point out, to my sorrow, again and again, unfairness and injustice—injustice which we will not, as Englishmen and Englishwomen, tolerate. (No, no, and prolonged applause.) Now, Sir, there is a Court of Appeal even behind this Corporation in a matter like this. We are acting under a Royal Charter. We are responsible to a higher authority even than this Corporation, and the question remains to be decided whether or not this Corporation can protect itself, and whether it will say

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