

read at a Congress in Buda Pesth, publicly stating that the object of the Association was to obtain legislation with this object. At this Conference, a resolution put to the meeting was carried by six votes to five; the fifth vote was that of Miss Wedgewood, Matron of the Royal Free Hospital, and delegate of the Royal British Nurses' Association; and the sixth vote was that of Mr. Fardon, Hon. Secretary of the Royal British Nurses' Association. In order to show in the most simple form the manner in which this lady and gentleman carried out the principles publicly advocated by Her Royal Highness and the Association, we place in parallel columns the Report adopted by the General Council in October, 1894, and the Resolution *only carried by Miss Wedgewood's and Mr. Fardon's votes* some fifteen months later.

*General Council
Report.*

"It (Her Royal Highness' paper) is remarkable as being an articulate public expression of the aspirations of the Corporation for the establishment of a State-recognised Register of Trained Nurses, based on an independent and similarly recognised examination."

Putting aside for the present the fact that these prominent members of the Association publicly voted against the very principles on which their Association is founded; and publicly announced, therefore, their opinion that their Association takes money from Nurses in aid of a system which is "injurious" to them; we must emphasize the palpable fact that if Miss Wedgewood and Mr. Fardon had voted in accordance with the principles which their Association advocates, and with the publicly-expressed views of Her Royal Highness, its President, the majority of votes would have been in favour of, and not against, State Registration. We hold, therefore, that the statement of Mr. Fardon's which we have quoted was most misleading; and that it should have been accepted by the Association is a repudiation of its principles, only explicable by the manner in which the

*British Medical Association
Conference
Resolution.*

"That a legal system for the registration of Nurses is inexpedient in principle, injurious to the best interests of Nurses, and of doubtful public benefit."

Report in question was palmed off upon the Meeting. In common fairness, Mr. Fardon should, at least, have stated that the Conference to which he alluded—composed as it was, for the most part, of representatives of small nursing institutions and unprofessional persons—could not in any sense be regarded as authoritative, or representative of the Nursing world.

At the last Annual Meeting it was announced that preparations were being made for inaugurating local centres of the Association in Southampton, Cambridge, and Brighton. It is characteristic of the Executive Committee that nothing has yet been done in Southampton or Cambridge, and that we are again promised in this Annual Report local centres, at some future date, in Brighton and Newcastle-on-Tyne—a promise which, if the present management continues, it may confidently be expected will be duly repeated in the Annual Report of 1897.

In the last Annual Report, the Association was told that the efforts of the Executive Committee during the then coming year would be devoted to the establishment of local centres, "to the task of revising and re-casting the Bye-laws," and "to the extension of the Association in the sister kingdom of Scotland." The results of the Executive Committee's efforts in regard to local centres has just been shown; and in the present Annual Report Mr. Fardon promises once again that the revision of the Bye-laws will be dealt with; while in "the sister kingdom of Scotland" it is asserted that six Nurses have been registered in three years!

The proposed efforts of the Executive Committee, in fact, have in each instance resulted in what our American friends significantly term "a fizzle." The one and only thing which the Executive Committee have actually done during the past year is to spend over eight hundred pounds more than the *reliable*—that is to say, the ordinary—income of the Association, and to land the Corporation in a quagmire of debt. But these facts are not stated in Mr. Fardon's Report.

Whether or not the good intentions now expressed will follow their predecessors to the limbo of forgotten things, we must wait for the next Annual Meeting to determine. But we have some confidence in believing that the Executive Committee will find other work to be accomplished during the ensuing year, which finds no place in Mr. Fardon's forecast.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)