

matter in the Report, Sir James Crichton-Browne, who was in the chair, ruled that it could not be discussed twice, and that as there was a distinct Resolution to be proposed upon the subject, he could not allow it to be discussed on the Report as well. In the belief that this was an honourable and straightforward objection, the Meeting agreed to it, and the contested Report was adopted without discussion. But when the specific Resolution was reached, a few minutes afterwards, Sir James Crichton-Browne ruled that also out of order, without any justification or right. He thus prevented the Governing Body of the Association from discussing a matter of the greatest importance to the Corporation. The Meeting broke up in disorder, the Chairman being loudly hissed, but the trick had succeeded, at least, for a time. On January 26th, the General Meeting of members of the Association, summoned in the name of Her Royal Highness Princess Christian, was held to consider a Resolution condemning Nurse Barlow; and, once more, Sir James Crichton-Browne so proved his partisanship in the Chair that he was called to order for it. He also refused to count the votes given at the Meeting or to allow the names of those who voted to be taken down, so that to this day it is unknown who voted, or how they voted. But Sir James Crichton-Browne declared that the Resolution—condemning a woman for defending herself against a cowardly attack, and condemning a Nurse for proceedings which had been justified by one of Her Majesty's Judges—was carried. We have always disputed that fact; and if it were true it would reflect the greatest discredit upon the Royal British Nurses' Association, for we do not believe that any other body of Englishmen and Englishwomen would have agreed to such an unprecedented attempt to override a decision of the High Courts of Justice. The Resolution was manifestly malicious; and it was also eminently ridiculous, because it did Miss Barlow no harm; she had won her case, she had discredited her assailants, and the Corporation had to pay her costs.

In July, the Annual Meeting was held, and it will be fresh in the memory of our readers how Sir James Crichton-Browne once more, by a quibble, succeeded in preventing the members of the Corporation from discussing the discreditable management of its affairs. But this time he

was taken to task, and a Jury of his countrymen, in the City of London, found that he had acted maliciously and wrongfully. On the point of law, two of the Judges have recently held that there was no cause of action; but the verdict of the Jury remains upon the point of fact, and it is quite certain that on any similar occasion in future, similar proceedings will be taken, and that then the judgment would probably be upheld.

Finally, within the last few weeks, an attempt has been made to carry out secretly a plan fraught with discredit to the Register of Trained Nurses and involving the certain deception of the sick public. But the Nursing profession at last seems to be aroused, and from every part of the country we have this week received reports which show us that the "Indignation Meeting" to be held in the first week of the New Year will fix the serious discredit for the gross mismanagement of the Association, and for the attempt to delude the public, upon those who are responsible for these proceedings.

Early in January, the British Medical Association held a meeting to consider the Registration of Nurses, and by 7 votes to 5 a resolution was passed that State Registration was inexpedient and dangerous. Miss Wedgwood, who was present as the delegate from the Royal British Nurses' Association, actually voted for the resolution, and thus publicly on behalf of the Association, repudiated the very principle which the Association was formed to carry out, and which Her Royal Highness Princess Christian had publicly pledged the Association to work for. It is a strange fact that the officials have been so oblivious of their duty both to the President and to the Association that they have not even disavowed Miss Wedgwood's action in this matter.

The past year has been therefore, stormy and discreditable as far as the Royal British Nurses' Association is concerned; but we believe that, out of evil, good will come, and that the publicity which will now be drawn to the proceedings of the officials will purify its management, and therefore advance its usefulness. 1896 has been a year of storm and stress, but we have reason to think that peace and quiet and useful progress may characterise 1897.

The past year has been remarkable for the marked determination exhibited by the medi-

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)