

they were all opposed by Mr. Fardon, who has now placed every fourth trained nurse at the Middlesex Hospital upon the governing body of a presumably national and representative Association.

For Mr. Fardon to "repudiate strongly any suggestion that those nurses are used for our purpose" is a mere farce. How long would one of those sisters or nurses remain on the nursing staff of Middlesex Hospital, if they dared to oppose the orders of *matron and medical officer combined*? The founders and independent medical men of the Royal British Nurses' Association, who have been shuffled off the Council, and whom Mr. Fardon and Miss Thorold have recommended, in the proposed new Bye-laws, should be shuffled off the Executive Committee, because they refuse to condone a tyrannous and illegal conduct of business, are examples of an attempted autocracy which cannot be explained away.

And now that Mr. Fardon has informed the members of the Royal British Nurses' Association that he betrayed their interests on the vital principle of legal registration at the instigation of the Committee of the Middlesex Hospital, no doubt the nursing staff of that hospital are well aware that they would hardly be likely to receive support from their Committee if they dared to take an independent course.

The truth is, that the staff of this hospital are being utilised in the most unprecedented manner, to withhold from the nurse members the rights and privileges granted to them in the Royal Charter; and instead of our Corporation meeting a national need, it is being utilised for the benefit of a few metropolitan nurses, absolutely under the control of the Hon. Officers, and who are thus repaid for their support. For instance, the Chartered Nurses' Society, have constant and free advertisement in our journal to the exclusion of all other members of the Association. So that the subscriptions of members attached to other co-operations of nurses are used practically to advertise, and in consequence to support, the Chartered and Middlesex private nursing institutions, to the resulting depreciation of other societies.

We are informed that the present struggle of "right against might" is creating much interest in nursing circles in the States and Canada. The following remarks from the *Nursing World* are, therefore, of interest:—

#### "A DISEASED ORGANISATION.

From the trend of events as gathered from our London exchanges it is painfully apparent that the Royal British Nurses' Association is rapidly becoming

disorganised. We might say, as in medical parlance, that this useful and beautiful body is evidently afflicted with some deep-seated disease which has not only already interfered seriously with its normal functioning, but which threatens in time to sap its very life. . . . What this particular disease is we do not know, but have an idea that it is somewhat analogous to softening of the brain. We are glad that the Medical Practitioners' Association has recently taken hold of the 'case,' and that we may look for a diagnosis and outline of treatment.

The society was founded in 1887 by nurses, for the benefit of nurses, and for the protection of the public, and in 1893 received a Royal Charter. Until then it had been chiefly managed by leading hospital matrons, and so successfully and economically that it had carried out several valuable schemes, and had accumulated a snug sum of money in its treasury. But, we are told, as soon as success had been gained half a dozen medical men commenced what now proves to be a deliberate plan to take all power and authority of the Association out of the hands of the nurses.

Having gained official positions these gentlemen pointed out a flaw in the Bye-laws of the Association, and, by using this as a lever, succeeded in removing from the General Council, or Governing Body, the matrons who had founded the Association, and who had been promised permanent seats in the General Council. An emphatic protest naturally followed, and the courts were appealed to by the injured matrons. From this time on, it appears that protest and honest endeavour to secure rights on the one hand were met by indirection, wire-pulling, and subterfuge on the other, so that at the present time the objects for which the society was founded are entirely lost sight of, and the breach between the opposing factions widens.

We watch with interest the final outcome of this difficulty, and trust that with our esteemed contemporary, the NURSING RECORD, as chief consulting physician, the actual malady may be clearly pointed out, and the remedy speedy and sure."

### Answers to Prize Questions.

WE have pleasure in announcing that the highest number of marks in answer to the Prize Questions have this month been again awarded to Miss Kate S. Clark, M.R.B.N.A., of 2, Bellevue Terrace, Edinburgh, who has sent in the following replies:—

I.—What would be the advantages of State Registration of Nurses to the Public?

The interests of the public are quite as much involved in State Registration as even those of nurses themselves and the medical profession. It is surprising that, considering the want of organisation, and the absolute lack of control, that prevails at present in the nursing world, the public have not risen in arms long ago, and refused the risks they have run, in having to endure the services of women who give themselves out to be trained nurses, but whose knowledge of their work has been acquired in

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)