

means are afforded or possible, under the Charter, for the election of the General Council, except by the members of the Corporation present at the Annual General Meeting. The Bye-Laws of the Corporation (Section E, 4) read as follows:—"The Members of the General Council shall be annually *selected* by means of voting papers sent to all the Members of the Corporation . . . and shall be *elected* at the Annual Meeting."

The published Agenda of the Annual Meeting of the Association held on July 22nd, 1897, contained the following: "(2) To elect the General Council for the ensuing year." At every previous Annual Meeting of the Association, the list of those proposed for election on the General Council has been read to the Meeting, and formally proposed, seconded, and adopted by them. At the Meeting in 1896, with Sir James Crichton Browne in the Chair, this Resolution was actively debated. In fact, until this year, the necessity of compliance with the conditions of the Charter and Bye-Laws, as to the election of the General Council, by the Annual Meeting has been invariably recognized.

At the Annual Meeting of this year, however, the Chairman, Sir James Crichton Browne, once more exhibited his indifference to the provisions of the Charter and Bye-laws; because the following is the shorthand report of the proceedings when the election of the General Council was reached. Sir James Crichton Browne having called for and received the report of the scrutineers on the papers for the General Council, said—"The Council, as proposed by your Executive Committee, is elected by an enormous majority. I do not suppose you wish the names read, as the list has been in the hands of every member, and I therefore declare from the Chair the names upon this list are those of the members duly elected to serve on the Council for the ensuing year."

"Mrs. BEDFORD FENWICK: There are great objections felt to this list, and before you put the matter to the Meeting—"

"The CHAIRMAN: The matter is closed. I have declared the Council duly elected. I call on Dr. Bezly Thorne to propose the next resolution."

If the accuracy of the shorthand notes be impugned, although they were published and not questioned at the time, it is noteworthy that they are corroborated by the official report of the Annual Meeting published in the *Nurses' Journal* for August, 1897, which distinctly shows that, for the first time in

the history of the Association, the list of names proposed for the General Council was not submitted to the Annual Meeting; and that the Meeting, therefore, in direct contravention of the Charter and Bye-Laws, was not permitted by the Chairman to elect the General Council for the ensuing year. As the General Council can only be elected at the Annual Meeting, it would seem that not only is there at present no legally elected General Council in existence, but also that no General Council can now be elected until the Annual Meeting next year.

Assuming this to be the case, it is clear that the Meeting held on October 15th was not a meeting of a legally constituted General Council of the Corporation, and, in that event, it is clear that the Resolutions passed at such an informal Meeting were invalid and of no effect. Then, as the Honorary Officers must, according to the Bye-Laws, be appointed "at the October Meeting of the General Council," and as the elected Members of the Executive Committee must be "appointed at the October Meeting of the General Council," if the Resolutions appointing those officials and Executive Committee were invalid and irregular, not only does the Association possess at present no legally elected Vice-Chairmen, Treasurer, and Honorary Secretaries, or any elected Members of the Executive Committee, but none of them can now be appointed until next October!

The further consequence of such a condition of affairs is that if these officials and Executive Committee have not been legally appointed, by a legally elected body, they have no legal authority or power to act in those respective capacities. We understand that this matter has been referred to high legal authorities, and, for the sake of the officials themselves, we would advise them to obtain such legal advice also. We are reminded of an "opinion" given by Mr. Muir Mackenzie, the standing Counsel of the Association, that the General Council can only be elected by the Members at the Annual Meeting. Presuming that the opinions of the highest authorities corroborate that of the Counsel of the Association, and that the Association possesses, at the present time, no elected Council, or Executive, and no officials, the force of our opening statement is obvious—that the officials, by their mismanagement, and Sir James Crichton Browne, by his attempted autocracy, have reduced the Association to a most pitiable and ridiculous deadlock.

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