

did not venture to make any reply to them. Such silence is highly significant. It was hinted that the matter would be brought before the General Meeting of members to be held on the 22nd inst.; and Mr. Fardon apparently assumed that the matrons and medical men who have made these charges would at that meeting attempt to move a vote of censure upon the officials. We go to press before that meeting is held, but we imagine that such a view only proves how completely Mr. Fardon and his friends have misunderstood the position of affairs. They have doubtless been emboldened, and probably misled, by the patience and forbearance with which their proceedings have been received, and thus have imagined that they were omnipotent, and that their autocracy would be permitted to continue indefinitely.

They may not yet have discovered their error, but in that case we imagine it will not be long before they do so. Speaking, of course, before the event, we would almost venture to predict that they will attempt to bring some statement before the Annual Meeting, denying the charges, and that they may actually believe that this will close the matter. From our knowledge of these gentlemen, we feel confident that nothing will be further from their wishes than to demand that a public inquiry should be made into their conduct. They will doubtless evince a modesty they have hitherto hid with conspicuous success, and will struggle and wriggle to avoid their superlative excellencies as administrators being revealed to an admiring public. So conscious are they of their uprightness in word and thought and deed, that they would infinitely rather suffer a baby martyrdom than permit their rectitude to be proved to all the world at a public inquiry. Such, we venture to predict, will be the attitude assumed by the officials. One section of their admirers will probably consider it dignified; another may indulgently describe it as "sitting tight." But the public, we hear, are, on all sides, expressing surprise that any men, who desire to be considered honourable, should exhibit such evident dread and dismay at the prospect of being compelled to "face the music." It is really not wise of the officials to show how frightened they are. We do not desire their case to be prejudged, and we hope they will speedily realise that the public inquiry now demanded will be granted, however much they dislike the prospect.

## Annotations.

### A FLASH IN THE PAN.

WE observe with satisfaction that the following resolution was placed by Miss Entwistle upon the agenda of the recent Council Meeting of the Royal British Nurses' Association:—

"To ask that the Executive Committee will inquire into and report on the hours usually worked per week by nurses in hospitals. And that the average number be ascertained of those who break down in the training schools annually; also of those trained nurses who break down after five or six years' work, and have to relinquish their profession."

The need for inquiry into and reform in these matters is obvious, and the initiative should undoubtedly be taken by the Nurses' Association. King's College Hospital, where, under the able supervision of Miss Monk, the nursing has attained to a high standard of excellence, has shown the way in shortening the hours on duty of the nursing staff. In those hospitals, also, where the Hon. Sydney Holland is chairman, the conditions under which the nurses work have been much improved, and it is certain that other hospitals must follow the lead thus given. Miss Entwistle's resolution, therefore, drew attention to a matter of considerable public importance, and is further noteworthy as marking the first occasion for several years in which a nurse has brought any question of professional importance before the Nurses' Association. But it cannot be hoped that any resolution dealing with professional advancement, or showing an interest in professional matters, will receive the support of the hon. officers, under the present policy of retrogression and intimidation. It would be interesting to know why Miss Entwistle withdrew the resolution which was placed on the agenda in her name.

### COCK-MATRONS.

A MEMBER of the Stockton Hospital Committee, says the *Northern Echo*, recently suggested that the Committee should take over the duty of engaging and discharging the nurses, servants, &c., which at present is vested in the matron. This proposal, however, met with scant favour for obvious reasons. As one of the members said, he could back himself to pick a good-looking lot, and there lies the danger, for imagine the

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