

Mr. Fardon has given but little reason to the members of the Association to venerate his abilities, but it must cause them as much astonishment as amusement to peruse his latest effort; for it is not unfair to say that a more damaging, as well as a more feeble, reply could hardly have been expected. He pretends to summarise the serious charges made against the officials under eight heads, and it will be observed that he finds it impossible to meet even that diminished number. Our readers will notice from the statement itself, which is given elsewhere, that the following summarises it by no means unfairly:

The first charge—the violation of the pledges given to the *ex officio* matrons, in 1895—is met by a vague prediction that new promises may be made in the future to other *ex officio* matrons. The second charge—that the matrons were deceived by the “friendly conference” in 1895—is met by the suggestion that promises, privately made by members of the Executive Committee, “could not be binding upon that body”—chiefly composed of those same persons. The third charge—the threat to ruin a nurse who had complained of their mismanagement, and who sought and obtained the protection of a Court of Law—is met by the prudent opinion that “it does not appear necessary to re-open the subject.” The fourth charge—the financial mismanagement—with equal discretion, Mr. Fardon considers “it would be improper to discuss at present.” The fifth charge—that free discussion is prevented—is simply denied. The sixth charge—that the Council is packed with nurses and medical men, connected with the Middlesex Hospital—is misquoted, denied, and then admitted. The seventh charge—that the officials had drawn up new Bye-laws, and had prevented the Executive Committee from discussing these—is simply denied. But the officials did not venture to produce the minute books in support of their denial. The eighth charge—the misuse of the *Nurses' Journal*—is simply denied, and is then partially admitted.

It is a fact, therefore, which cannot be disputed that the so-called reply to the charges emanates from Mr. Fardon alone; and his failure to refute them may not unfairly be regarded as proof positive that his colleagues are unable to do so.

No greater justification of the action taken against the officials could have been expected, or given, than is furnished by Mr. Fardon's defence. The fact that, out of an Association of 2,700 members, only 104 came up to sup-

port and vote for the present managers should convince even them that their system is hopeless and generally condemned.

Annotations.

EFFECTUAL ISOLATION.

THE protest of the Incorporated Medical Practitioners' Association mentioned that the control of the Royal British Nurses' Association had practically been usurped by five medical men. The fact is flatly denied by Mr. Fardon, but the Annual Meeting produced excellent corroboration of the charge. The only people who would go on the platform were Sir James Crichton-Browne, Mr. John Langton, Mr. Fardon, Mr. Pick, Mr. Brudenell Carter, Miss Thorold, the Vice-Chairman, and Mrs. Dacre Craven, who was reported to have resigned, three months ago, her post as Hon. Secretary. None of the eminent medical men who are Vice-Presidents came to support the publicly impugned officials. The matrons of the leading London and Provincial hospitals who formerly filled the platform at these meetings were conspicuous by their absence. The few matrons who have supported the present officials maintained an equally significant silence and abstention from any public vindication of their friends. The medical profession, in fact, clearly intend to leave the officials to defend themselves, and, if they do not disprove the charges publicly made against them, their professional brethren will more strongly and effectually condemn them, than even the public will do.

INEFFECTUAL DISINFECTION.

WHEN isolation is necessary, disinfection is generally more or less advisable. Dr. Buzzard was, therefore, acting on strictly sanitary principles when he attempted to whitewash the isolated officials at the Annual Meeting of the Royal British Nurses' Association. But disinfection to be useful must be thorough, and it must be admitted that Dr. Buzzard's attempt was a sad *fiasco*. In fact, it will require an immense amount of fumigation to remove the effects of his proceeding. One Bye-law of the Corporation is most definite. It ordains that “No Resolution shall be proposed at any Annual or Special General Meeting unless the full text of the Resolution shall have been sent in writing and by registered letter to the Secretary, at least three weeks previously, for insertion upon the agenda of the said meeting.” Dr. Buzzard stated that the charges against the officials—*e.g.*, of violating the Bye-laws and Charter—were unfounded. Yet he allowed himself to be used by the officials to commit a grave irregularity; because, of course, he never sent his resolution in writing to the secretary by registered letter. Only a year ago, Sir

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