

James Crichton-Browne prevented a vote of censure being moved on himself and the other officials on the pretence that it had not been sent in a registered envelope. Yet he actually permitted Dr. Buzzard to move, and speak at length, to a vote of confidence in the officials—of which no notice whatever had been given. A more flagrant example of the conduct of the officials could hardly have been given; and we cordially thank Dr. Buzzard for the excellent object-lesson he has provided for the public.

Royal British Nurses' Association.

(Incorporated by Royal Charter.)



THE annual meeting of the Royal British Nurses' Association was held in the Hall of the Imperial Institute, on Thursday, 22nd July, 1897. Those on the platform were Sir James Crichton-Browne, Mr. Pickering Pick, Mr. Brudenell-Carter, Mr. Edward Fardon, and Mr. John Langton, Mrs. Dacre Craven, and Miss Thorold. There was a large

attendance of nurses and others.

The proceedings commenced at 11 a.m., when the Hon. Sec. (Mr. Fardon) read the notice convening the meeting.

The CHAIRMAN, (Sir James Crichton-Browne) announced that the following ladies and gentlemen had been nominated scrutineers of the voting papers: Mrs. Okeil, Dr. Calvert, Dr. Alderson, Miss G. Scott, Mr. Mark Howell, Miss Morton, and Miss Deamster. The meeting then adjourned until twelve o'clock.

On resuming, Sir James Crichton-Browne said he took the chair at the express desire of Her Royal Highness Princess Christian, who was unable to be present.

Mrs. DACRE CRAVEN (Nurse Hon. Secretary), read the minutes of the last annual meeting.

On the question of confirming the Minutes being put to the meeting.

Dr. BEDFORD FENWICK said: Sir, I object to these minutes as incorrect, because they deliberately suppress a most important fact—the fact that when at the last annual meeting you ruled that Miss Breay could not move her resolution, because you stated it had not been sent in a registered envelope, Miss Breay came up to the table and presented you with the post-office receipt for its registration. You informed the meeting that it was only a receipt for an "express" letter, and you then persisted in your objection that Miss Breay could not move her resolution.

The CHAIRMAN: To the best of my judgment and belief the letter was not a registered letter. Dr. Bedford Fenwick says that a receipt for a registered letter, which I cannot connect with the one that was lying upon the table, was handed to me. If he desires the incident to be recorded in the minutes it shall be done, so that they shall be correct.

Miss BREAY: I think I may state that I told the Chairman that the receipt was the receipt for that letter, and that by questioning my word he practically accused me of untruth. (Applause.)

A NURSE MEMBER said that it was customary amongst gentlemen to accept a lady's word without question, and she wished to know why Sir James Crichton-Browne did not act in that manner. (Loud applause.)

After considerable discussion, the Chairman accepted the form of words suggested by Dr. Fenwick, and wrote them into the minutes, reading them as follows:—"The Chairman ruled that the resolution was out of order, and could not be received, upon the ground that it should have been sent in a registered letter. Miss Breay presented to the Chairman a receipt for a registered letter, which she said referred to the letter containing her resolution." (Applause.)

With this correction the minutes were then confirmed.

Mr. FARDON (Hon. Medical Secretary): I desire to ask, as a matter of privilege, leave to bring certain facts before this meeting, materially concerning the Association. It is, I suppose, within the knowledge of most, if not all of us, that there have recently appeared in the public press certain signed statements, bringing allegations and charges against the officials of this Association. Those statements were not published until after the period had elapsed when one would have been able to have placed a resolution regarding them, to be moved at this meeting, on the Agenda. But I took the opportunity—the first I had—at the General Council meeting, to bring these statements before that meeting, and to express the hope that an opportunity might be given to members for discussing them and voting upon them. And I also brought the matter before a specially summoned meeting of the Executive Committee, and I obtained from that Committee leave to read a statement dealing with the allegations that were contained in those documents. And my purpose now is to ask you to allow me to read that statement. I believe that it is always allowable to interrupt the ordinary business of a meeting, when what amounts certainly to a vote of censure or to an expression of censure against the officials, has been brought forward, in order that they should be allowed to say anything that they may feel they ought to say upon the subject, and there should be no delay in giving an opportunity to the members for expressing their opinions upon it, and that is the reason why I now ask the permission of this meeting to read this statement, which I am authorised to do by the Executive Committee. (Applause.)

Mrs. BEDFORD FENWICK: It should be made quite clear that this statement has never been brought before the Executive Committee, and that it is drawn up by Mr. Fardon, and is merely his opinion and his statement.

The CHAIRMAN: There is not the slightest irregularity in allowing Mr. Fardon to make a personal explanation. The next business before the meeting is the presentation of the report of the Executive Committee. In presenting that report, which it is the duty of the Hon. Medical Secretary to do, he is perfectly at liberty to make a statement. For that statement he is personally responsible (hear, hear), and I believe that in the statement that has been circulated amongst the members, that fact has been made perfectly clear (No! no!)

A NURSE MEMBER said that the members of the Association had not received a copy of the Hon. Secretary's statement. (Hear, hear.)

The CHAIRMAN: Then you will hear it now.

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