

during the delivery of her speech, and, more than once, the Chairman was called upon to keep order.

Miss FOGGO THOMPSON said that, as an independent member who had had much to do with the internal management of the Association during the time it was controlled by Dr. and Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, she desired, for the guidance and information of members of the Association, to ask Mrs. Bedford Fenwick one question, which she hoped would be answered straightforwardly. ("Oh!") It appeared to her, and a great many others, that there was some very simple cause for the internal personalities which had taken place at the meetings of the Association since Dr. Bedford Fenwick resigned the office of Treasurer. The question she desired to put was, whether Mrs. Bedford Fenwick had not, on more than one occasion, and in the presence of more than one person, used words to the effect that if she (Mrs. Bedford Fenwick) were not permitted to control the Association, she (Mrs. Bedford Fenwick) intended to wreck it, for no one else should conduct its affairs.

The Chairman was appealed to, as to whether Miss Thompson's question was in order, and, amid a scene of much excitement he ruled that Mrs. Bedford Fenwick was not compelled to answer it.

Mrs. BEDFORD FENWICK remarked that this was evidently the officials' idea of "courtesy in debate," and added—I am not obliged to answer Miss Foggo-Thompson, but I will do so, and I say it is an absolute untruth. (At this point, the Chairman intervened and said he could not allow the use of the word "untruth.") I call upon her to produce any written evidence or any witness of the false suggestion she has made. That I had the honour with other matrons of helping to form this Association I am proud to say is true, and I shall never, so long as I am a member, submit to what I know to be unjust; and if, by not submitting to what is wrong and unjust, the Association, as it is now controlled is injured, that will not be my fault. The principles upon which it was founded will remain, and the Association, if it is to be of any value to nurses in any way—or to the public—will have to be worked again, as it formerly was, upon those principles. (Applause.)

The Chairman said he desired to allow the very fullest latitude of debate. Mrs. Bedford Fenwick was not compelled to answer that question had she not thought it desirable, but he could not approve of Mrs. Bedford Fenwick accusing any member of their Association of a deliberate untruth. He felt sure that Mrs. Bedford Fenwick had spoken on the spur of the moment, and that she would withdraw that word and substitute for it an "erroneous statement."

Mrs. BEDFORD FENWICK refused to withdraw the word "untruth" which just fitted the question. (Applause.)

A MEMBER expressed surprise that the Chairman should be so punctilious as to the word "untruth," when at the Council meeting a fortnight ago he permitted Dr. Bezly Thorne to say that a certain statement was "infamous and blackguardly." (Hisses.)

The CHAIRMAN said he could not permit any discussion of what took place at the Council meeting.

Miss THOMPSON: Do you also deny that since you have returned from Greece you have said to members of the Association that if you spent your last cent you intended to employ the strongest Counsel you could get to smash the Association up?

Mrs. BEDFORD FENWICK said that was also entirely untrue.

The CHAIRMAN: This incident must end at once.

Dr. BEDFORD FENWICK: Questions have been asked without the slightest foundation, or evidence, and have been asked for reasons which are obvious. I have only to say, Sir, that at the public inquiry which is demanded, and which undoubtedly will be granted, Miss Foggo Thompson will be able to attend and to explain the reasons, and the grounds, for her questions.

The CHAIRMAN thought enough had been said on the subject. As to the inquiry that Dr. Bedford Fenwick had referred to, he (the Chairman) could only tell them that it had been asked for and refused. If the Home Secretary and the House of Commons were to institute an inquiry into the affairs of every society and association in which a minority did not care to bow to the majority, they would have their hands full. (Laughter.)

Miss CLARA LEE: I desire to say that I have taken no part hitherto on either side in the disputes that have arisen in the Association. But I have felt it my duty to come from Ireland to attend this meeting, in order that I may express the views which I, and the matrons of various leading Irish Hospitals feel upon this subject. We consider that the Nurses' Association was founded for the benefit of nurses. It was successful and useful while the nurses managed it. For the last three years it has been managed by a few medical men, and it is now doing nothing for nurses except to bring the greatest disgrace upon them. Matrons who object to this are publicly and privately insulted. Only last week, Dr. Bezly Thorne called some statement made in the Council against the officials, "infamous and blackguardly." In the first place, therefore, I desire to say that gentlewomen are not accustomed to such language and such treatment, and that it is not to be wondered at if they decline any longer to be associated with those who employ such methods. (Loud applause.)

At the same time we feel very strongly that this is our Association, not theirs; that it was meant for our benefit, and not for that of a few medical men. They pretend that it is no benefit to them. Then we ask why have Sir James Crichton-Browne, Mr. John Langton, Mr. Edward Fardon, and Dr. Bezly Thorne ousted us out of the management of our own Association? Why do they persist in preventing us from even criticising the management of our own affairs? When we write letters of complaint, why are those letters suppressed and kept back from the body to which they are addressed? (Loud applause.)

We strongly object to the fact that Miss Wedgwood, as a delegate of the Association, voted at a public Conference in favour of a resolution condemning Registration as "injurious to nurses," and that her action was deliberately upheld by the officials, although the Association was chiefly founded to bring about the Registration of trained nurses, and many hundreds of women have been persuaded by the Association to pay it for registering them, as a privilege of the utmost value to them. The Association, therefore, is either taking money from the nurses by false pretences, or the officials have done a most serious wrong to the principles which the Association was founded to promote. In either case, their conduct appears to us to be most discreditable to the Association. (Loud applause.)

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