

British Nurses' Association and be insulted, until the present state of affairs is altered. (Applause.) Without wearying this meeting by exposing its weakness in detail, I would say that this statement of Mr. Fardon's is the most forcibly feeble thing that I have ever seen. It does not really deal with one single serious charge. (Applause.) Of a charge which is really important the reply says: "it does not appear to be necessary to re-open the subject." Exactly—and most prudent and wise. (Much laughter.) Of another important matter we are gravely told that it would be very wrong and improper to discuss it here! Such a defence stamps the charges at once as unanswerable. This reply is simply not worth the paper it is printed upon. On the one side, are the deliberate charges, made by an important body of medical men, and by 35 well-known matrons. ("Name!" from Miss De Pledge.) I am sorry that Miss De Pledge is so little aware of what is going on in the Association that she does not know the names of those who are taking this action.

MISS DE PLEDGE: Not one of them is in active work. (Loud applause.)

DR. FENWICK: Well—I take the first name that I notice: Miss C. M. Beachcroft; she is the matron of the Lincoln County Hospital—one of the most important nurse training schools in the provinces. I ask Miss De Pledge whether Miss Beachcroft is not in active work? (Applause.) I see here the name of Miss Margaret Huxley, the matron of the Sir Patrick Dun's Hospital, Dublin—certainly one of the most important training schools in Ireland. May I ask Miss De Pledge if Miss Huxley is in active service? Then here is the name of Miss Henrietta Poole, matron of Blackburn Infirmary, one of the leading training schools in Lancashire. These ladies are all in active service. Every one of the other ladies who have signed the Protest hold, or have held, important positions in the nursing world. I only call attention to this inaccuracy on the part of Miss De Pledge simply to show the way in which members who desire to criticise the management are contradicted without reason, or regard to accuracy.

MISS DE PLEDGE: I was referring to another Protest. (Laughter.)

DR. FENWICK: What other Protest? Really, sir, I cannot undertake to read Miss De Pledge's mind. I was speaking about the statement signed by thirty-five well-known matrons. It is really not my fault if Miss De Pledge interrupts me by referring to something totally different. (Much laughter.) Now, these charges against the officials are deliberately made; they are deliberately brought before the public. This is only done after three years' persecution, after three years' injustice, after three years' deprivation of rights granted under the Charter. Those charges having been made, it appears to me extraordinary that the officials have not immediately demanded to be allowed to contradict and disprove them upon oath. When people are not afraid to face the truth, when they are well aware of the whole circumstances underlying and prompting certain proceedings, they are naturally anxious to have those circumstances publicly elicited. The charges made, have not been disproved. No serious attempt has been made to disprove them; it is believed they cannot be disproved. At any rate, a public inquiry is demanded, and what is more, the demand will be persisted in, week after week, and month after month, until that inquiry is granted.

(Loud applause.) With all due deference, Sir, you have misinformed the meeting by saying that the inquiry has been asked for and refused. A formal question was asked in the House of Commons in order to ascertain the proceedings that were necessary to obtain an inquiry, and the Home Office replied, "that as at present advised," the Home Secretary did not see the need for holding an inquiry. That reply was so thoroughly anticipated that it was predicted, in print, two or three days before it appeared. It was only the beginning of the movement that will take place in every part of this country during the coming autumn and winter until the public inquiry is granted by Parliament. (Much applause.)

MISS BREAY said that Mr. Pick mentioned in his speech that at the meeting held in his house the promise was made to the matrons that those who convened it would do their best to obtain the matrons' demands. She would ask—had they done their best?

MR. PICK said he could only reply that he had done his very best.

MR. FARDON said it was suggested that the officials were shirking a public inquiry. All he could say was that so far as the officials were concerned they were the people of all others who would desire the fullest and the freest inquiry. However, the question of an inquiry did not rest with the officials, it rested with the public, and with the people who acted for the public, and if the public did not want an inquiry it would not be held. Well, then, Mrs. Bedford Fenwick mentioned his name in connection with a conference convened by the British Medical Association to discuss the subject of the Registration of Trained Nurses. He was not there as a delegate of the society, but only as the delegate of the hospital to which he belonged. All the hospitals were requested to send delegates to the meeting to express the views of their own particular board on this matter of Registration. Dr. Woods had stated that although the Bye-laws required one-third of the matrons to retire every year, we need not have selected those particular matrons for retirement. Matrons and nurses who had to retire were not selected. When they had sat for three years they were obliged to retire.

THE CHAIRMAN: The Resolution before the meeting is that the report of the Executive Committee be received and adopted by this meeting. This is moved by Mr. Fardon, and seconded by Mrs. Coster.

The report was adopted *nem. con.*; many of those present refusing to vote at all.

THE HON. TREASURER, in moving the adoption of his report, said he must say a few words, not in defence of himself, because he was only an official, but in defence of the Association. They had to leave Oxford Circus Avenue on account of those premises being found too small. Several places were looked at, and they finally determined to take their present premises at 17, Old Cavendish Street, at a rent of £250. Over and above that there was a water-rate of £4 4s. a year, plus taxes, which amounted to £68 odd. With that, he was happy to say, he had nothing to do. Other places were looked at, but they were not so available as the one they had. It was a large initial expenditure to bear. They had, however, let off part of their premises to the value of £78, and they hoped soon to let their large room for the sum of £100 a year, which would reduce the cost of their premises by £180. They were now, moreover, saved con-

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