

prevented from discussing them. The fixed policy of the officials for the last three years has been to depreciate the Matron Members of the Association. For example, it must be remembered that in 1895 the leading Hospital Matrons, the ladies who had founded the Association, and who had been promised permanent seats on the General Council, were removed from the governing body of the Association, and that they were not replaced upon that body, as they might have been last year. Then, the packing of the General Council with the Nurses from the Middlesex Hospital, who, according to a contemporary, are women of the "domestic servant class," is a most unjustifiable attempt to dominate a Royal Chartered Corporation of Nurses, the majority of whom are educated gentlewomen. And that letters of protest from leading Hospital Matrons are received by these persons with contemptuous laughter at the General Council Meeting, is merely what might have been expected. So also is the manner in which Hospital Matrons are depreciated, and even insulted, in the pages of the *Nurses' Journal*—all these being sufficient proofs of the set and determinate plan of minimising, and if possible, destroying the Matrons' influence in the Nurses' Association. We should not be surprised if the new Bye-laws even proposed to diminish the number of Matrons upon the Executive Committee and the General Council, so as to obliterate their rightful, though now merely nominal, influence. Though this anticipation may seem to some to be an impossible suggestion on the part of the officials, it would only be in accord with the deliberate scheme to this end, which has been in progress.

It will be immediately recognised by every trained Nurse that the discipline upon which the proper and satisfactory working of a Nursing School depends, would be absolutely shattered and destroyed if the Sisters and Nurses were placed in a position to dictate to the Matrons. If, for example, in a soldiers' association, the privates were given power to dictate to their superior officers, the same topsy-turveydom would be attained as the officials have brought about in the Nurses' Association. Nurses themselves will feel that a system which destroys the bonds of discipline must be bad for themselves and their profession; and it is an extraordinary fact that any medical men should be so unwise and so shortsighted, to strike at the

very root of the authority which their profession should exercise over nurses, and that they cannot see that the system they are striving for has already reacted upon themselves in loss of respect, and must result in loss of authority.

Every nurse who values the future welfare of her profession, who desires to see proper discipline and good order maintained in her profession, and without which it must lose all public approval and confidence, and who realises that the credit of her profession means her own credit, should make a point of being present at the Annual Meeting of the Association, to be held on the 22nd inst. in London. And she will doubtless, then, evince by her vote her disapproval of the methods adopted by the officials of the Royal British Nurses' Association, which have brought the gravest public discredit on her Association, and may bring discord and trouble into every Nurse Training School, and injury therefore to every trained nurse.

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### A Woman's Question.

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A MEETING of women connected with various Societies will be held at 20, Upper Wimpole Street, on Thursday, the 8th inst., when Mrs. Bedford Fenwick and others will explain the difficulties which have arisen in the Royal British Nurses' Association. A strong Committee is now being formed to draw public attention to the manner in which the officials of the Association are endeavouring to deprive the nurse members of rights and privileges which have been embodied in the present Bye-laws. A meeting is also being arranged by the Metropolitan Association of Women for the same purpose. The immense importance to all Women's Societies of the present attempt of a few medical men to take the management of the first Chartered body of women out of the hands of the women, is too clear to need explanation. It is therefore felt to be necessary to determine what steps shall be taken by Women's Societies in various parts of the country to call public and Parliamentary attention to the circumstances in question, and to prevent the perpetration of such injustice.

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