

to take sides in pettifogging squabbles, which in some cases arise out of personal pique of women. Nor is it creditable that the Princess Christian, whose presidency was supposed to add dignity to the Association, should be involved as she has been in these teapot personalities. One would think, from the eagerness of members to plunge into law-suits about minor matters which are not worth litigation, that the Association existed for the benefit of lawyers and not for the promotion of nurses' interests. The state of the organisation has become a disgrace, and, until the eternal friction and the outside hostilities are ended, no progress need be expected.

Mr. Fardon thinks that the Association is only experiencing temporary vicissitudes, and that it will soon settle down to its legitimate work. We are not so hopeful about that. There is no indication that the personal animosities will disappear or that the spirit of faction will be abated. Mr. Fardon meets the charge that a clique of medical men are using the Association for their own ends, and if the Executive Committee have usurped the governing authority that is open to remedy. The constitution of the Association provides for representative control. There is nothing, Mr. Fardon says, to prevent the matrons and nurses who attack it, from the outside, joining the Association. And it is open to them to elect whom they choose to the General Council, and in this way obtain control of the executive. But were they to do so, hostilities would not cease. The change of government would not improve matters. There can be no progress until the nursing profession is united in promoting the interests and work of the Association. At present there is something like a dead-lock. The Association has fewer members than it had when the charter was obtained. Unless, therefore, the present unsatisfactory and demoralising state of things is to be indefinitely prolonged, an inquiry in which the public has confidence should be instituted. The Local Government Board holds inquiries into the conduct of a matron or a nurse, and the management of poor-law institutions. The management of the Nurses' Association is a matter of much more importance, and of the greatest interest to all connected with hospitals and poor-law infirmaries. And nothing short of an independent investigation can settle the numerous petty disputes and solve the intricate questions which at present paralyse the work of the Royal British Nurses' Association."

We are glad to observe that the *Medical Times* speaks plainly concerning the insult offered by Mr. Fardon and his medical supporters to the

President of the Incorporated Medical Practitioners' Association, and we have no doubt that energetic body of gentlemen will not fail to support the dignity of their Association.

#### THE ROYAL BRITISH NURSES' ASSOCIATION.\*

"In another column, there will be found a letter which has been sent to the press by a number of the matrons of leading hospitals. As our readers have doubtless observed, a similar protest has been made by the Council of the Incorporated Medical Practitioners' Association concerning the proceedings of the Royal British Nurses' Association. These proceedings are most noteworthy, and it may be explained that, in 1892, the latter Association determined to apply to Her Majesty the Queen in Council for a Royal Charter. The application was made by Princess Christian as President of the Association, and was strongly opposed by a number of leading hospital authorities. Her Royal Highness therefore applied to the medical profession, and especially to the Medical Practitioners' Association for their assistance to her application. In consequence, a special meeting of the members of our Association was called to consider the matter, and this was attended by three delegates from the Royal British Nurses' Association. These gentlemen were asked at the Meeting in question whether their Association would, in the event of a Charter being granted, place representatives of medical associations permanently on the governing body of the Nurses' Association, and especially on the Board or Committee entrusted with the control of the Registration of Nurses, and also whether a larger number of general practitioners would be placed on the Executive Committee of the Association than was at that time the case. These questions were answered without hesitation in the affirmative, and the Meeting of the Medical Practitioners' Association then passed a strong Resolution in favour of a Charter being granted to the Nurses, and used its influence in favour of this movement with considerable effect. The British Medical Association gave no assistance and indeed presented a memorial to the Privy Council somewhat adverse to the Petition for a Charter. At the Privy Council Inquiry, held in November, 1892, great stress was laid by Sir Horace Davey (now Lord Justice Davey), the Counsel for the Nurses' Association, upon the strong medical support given to the Nurses' Association. When the Charter was granted in 1893, new Bye-laws had to be drawn up, and the promises made to the Medical Practitioners' Association were

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