

Fenwick specially drew attention. The new Bye-laws proposed that the Association might appoint a Patron who should not be an Honorary Officer. Dr. Fenwick pointed out that this would be contrary to the Charter, and Sir James Crichton-Browne, as usual, distinguished himself by the exhibition of some temper, and of complete ignorance of the subject. Her Majesty's Privy Council, however, have upheld the objection which was raised, and therefore the first clause of the Bye-laws now proposed ordains that the Patron shall be an Honorary Officer. Dr. Fenwick also pointed out that according to the Charter the Vice-Presidents must be Honorary Officers, a fact which was denied. Once more the Privy Council have upheld Dr. Fenwick's reading of the Charter, so that the second Bye-law has now to be altered in order to make the Vice-Presidents Honorary Officers. The importance of the fact depends upon the positions which honorary officers hold in the Corporation.

Secondly, Dr. Fenwick pointed out the absurdity of the Bye-law proposed by the officials—that the subscription of members should be fixed by a bye-law, which could only be altered by consent of the Privy Council, and yet that the subscription might be altered at the will of any meeting of the Corporation without reference to the Privy Council. The Privy Council naturally refused to sanction this absurdity, and therefore this Bye-law has had to be altered to its original form.

Thirdly, Dr. Fenwick strongly objected to the attempt made by the officials to outwit the Privy Council by inserting the word "Register" in the Bye-laws, when their lordships distinctly gave their decision, in 1893, that the word would not be allowed. Of course, the Privy Council have declined to be tricked, but that the attempt should have been made, and that when repudiated, it should have been explained by the officials as due to their ignorance of the affairs of the Association, is neither creditable nor specious.

Then the outrageous proposal of the officials—which roused as much ridicule as indignation—and which was designed to allow the five officials to do just what they pleased in the Corporation, and to ignore the Charter, the Bye-laws, and everything else, has, of course, been refused by Her Majesty's Privy Council. It was worded as follows:

"XXVIII. In case any irregularity should occur in the convening or holding of any meeting of the Corporation, General Council, or Executive Committee, or in any election, or

any proceedings of any meeting, and the same shall not be publicly noticed, or objected to, at the meeting, all proceedings at such meetings shall be of the same force and validity as if no such irregularity had occurred. If such irregularity shall be publicly noticed and objected to, at such meeting, the meeting shall decide on the validity of such objection, and such decision shall be final and conclusive."

A more scandalous proposal could scarcely have been made; and it was a foregone conclusion that Her Majesty's Privy Council would refuse to sanction so preposterous an attempt to stultify the Charter and Bye-laws.

It is understood that the Privy Council have significantly declined to express any opinion as to the expediency of the proposed alterations in the constitution of the Association proposed by the persons we have named, and obediently accepted by their friends and dependents. But the public will, in due course, be asked to pass judgment upon them, and we have little doubt as to what their verdict will be. In brief, the new Bye-laws take away from the nurses the rights of self-government, and practically deprive them of all control over their own Association. They specifically provide that no Matron or Superintendent of Nurses shall be elected a member of the Corporation, unless she produces proof of "moral character." Such a Bye-law will appear to many to be designed as an insult to hospital matrons, and we are not surprised to learn that the suggestion has already aroused indignation. The Matrons of the leading hospitals, who were originally promised permanent *ex-officio* seats, have been turned out of those seats; a breach of faith and agreement which will greatly discredit the Association, for its promises in future will probably not be accepted, unless they are placed in legal form, over a sixpenny stamp. The provision that there shall be an equal number of nurses and Matrons placed upon the Executive Committee, is only another evidence of the clear determination of the officials to injure and depreciate the influence of the Matrons in the nursing world; an attempt which we know to be both foolish and futile, but one which will inevitably bring the greatest discredit upon the officials we have named, and the Association which has accepted their proposals.

The first result of the new Bye-laws will be the secession of a large number of important Matrons and well trained nurses from the membership of the Association. The officials evidently place the intelligence of these ladies at

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