

**Dr Yellowlees** said that at the present day it would not do to keep women out of the Association. The law had given them the right to practise, the British Medical Association had admitted them, and it would be unwise conservatism to exclude them. There was even a stronger reason why they should be admitted. Science knew nothing about sex, and the question of delicacy could not be brought forward. Women naturally knew more about women than men, and their assistance would be of very great value. . . .

**Dr Savage** (retired; formerly Bethlem Hospital, London) said that there were many Societies which admitted lady members. Of course there was a great difference between admitting them to the Association and allowing them to take part in the business of the Association. He quite thought the time had come when women should be recognised as assistants.

**Dr Ireland** said that there was a great difference between recognising the right of women to be admitted to the profession and admitting them as members of a particular Association. There were many matters which came before the Association which would be very disagreeable to have to discuss before women."

Eventually, "Dr Ireland's amendment was then put, seven voting for it and 23 against. The new rule

providing for the admission of ladies was then agreed to".

Of Dr Fleury, who was elected in 1894, there is little to mention. Dr Ireland's fears were unfounded, as no record appears of her having imposed her presence at any Association general meeting. She was "unavoidably absent" from the May 1895 Irish Divisional Meeting when her paper "Agitated Melancholia in Women" was read by the President. Dr Fleury remained a member until 1924. Undoubtedly her election paved the way for other women and by 1900, 14 women were, or had been, members including Dr A. H. A. Boyle, who became the first woman president in 1939.

## References

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## Wisdom

*A short series of short pieces (with questions)*

### 2. Choice

It is in the nature of eagles to fly. It is in the nature of human conditioning to develop attachments and aversions. The story is told of the court monkey who finds a luscious fruit inside a narrow-necked bowl. When the fruit is grasped however the monkey's full fist does not allow him to withdraw his hand, yet to the amusement of onlookers he will not relinquish the object of his desire. How foolish!

The story is amusing but might make the discerning uncomfortable. Are we not often similarly trapped by our attachments, at the mercy of our aversions, and defeated by our ignorance? How often, in difficult situations, do we human beings now know of or recognise the contribution we make ourselves to our unhappiness? How often do we forget that there is choice?

"There are three poisons", said the tenth century teacher Atisha, "Attachment, leading to desire; aversion, leading to hatred; and ignorance, leading to indifference."

The wise choice is the way of freedom. . . Freedom from what? Freedom from attachment, desire, passion. Freedom from dislikes, antipathies. Freedom from indifference. This is the way of detachment. The wise student says, "I want to be free more than I want what I want." How can this be achieved?

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