

all, then, reduced to a dead level of mediocrity? (Applause.) But there are some objections which are more reasonable than these. It is said that the three years' training is somewhat arbitrary and long, and that Nurses—I have heard it asserted in high quarters—may, without such training, gain an experience with regard to diseases of a certain class, and may safely be trusted with cases of the same disease, though the general training and knowledge may be small. Now, no disease known to medical men can be predicted to run an identical course. Nothing, in fact, happens in disease, as in real life, so frequently as the unexpected. What must happen if the Nurse is not fully trained? Why, the patient must become her study, not her charge, and the medical man in attendance her teacher in what she ought already to know, if she is to be of any assistance to him. (Loud applause.) Good nursing is not the result of mere technicalities; it means unlearning all the habits of a lifetime, and learning instead habits of order, method, kindness, refinement of touch, self-abnegation, the exercise of wise thought, limited discretion, and quiet decision in adverse circumstances. These are plants not of the forcing-house, but of slow, natural growth. The great majority of the Hospitals and Workhouse Infirmaries in this country have fixed the time of training for Nurses at three years. The Association has accepted that standard, and certainly has no need to defend itself from the reproach that that term is too lengthy. It has been settled by those who have done so, in order to protect the sick and helpless. Ladies and gentlemen, I have laid before you very briefly the aims of this Association, and whilst not forgetting the object of many of our members—namely, to earn an honourable livelihood—I hope I have shown that it is still more important for you—the public—that the Nurses should be able to do so under fair conditions. I might say, in the words of an old writer, that disease enters with an impartial tread the dwellings of the rich and of the

poor. The cause of good nursing is your cause, ladies and gentlemen, and I trust, therefore, that you will afford to the Royal British Nurses' Association your sympathy and your active assistance. (Loud applause.)

The LORD MAYOR: You have heard the resolution, which has been so eloquently proposed, seconded, and supported, and I ask you whether you approve of it, and if so, to indicate your approval in the usual way.

The resolution was carried unanimously with applause.

Sir DYCE DUCKWORTH: My Lord Mayor, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—The small task which has been committed to me this afternoon is, as I think you will allow, a good deal shorn of any formidableness which it might have had by the absence, which we all so deeply regret, of the Princess Christian. I am sure the members of this Association are extremely sorry not to see her Royal Highness in her place, and are also deeply sorry for the reason of her absence. Ours, I may say, is only one of several Nursing Associations for which the Princess has done good service, and perhaps we do not all know what a power of enthusiasm she possesses; how she inspires those who work with her with it, and what energy she has. The Princess is a splendid leader of men and women, she is an excellent organiser, and we all must feel that if she had been here to-day and seen how quietly, firmly, and unanimously the meeting has done its work, her heart would have been rejoiced. And when she hears the result of our gathering, I am sure it will give her sincere pleasure. I will not go over any of the excellent addresses we have had the privilege of listening to this afternoon. It is sufficient to know that we are determined to go forward whatever opposition we may meet with. I think the public will be struck with one significant fact. The opposition will not come from medical men, nor from well-trained Nurses engaged in active work. They know the necessity for reform too well to be able conscientiously to oppose it.



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