

them their ordinary rights of British citizenship, as well as their legal rights to professional justice. She has succeeded, but, I understand, at a heavy cost to herself, both in the trouble and anxiety she has had to go through, and also in the heavy expense of legal proceedings. I am told that over and above the taxed costs which the judge has ordered the Association to pay, her legal expenses will come to more than £100.

I feel very strongly that Nurses ought not to allow this burden to be borne by Miss Barlow, and I venture to suggest that we should follow the example set us by medical men in similar cases, and that we should subscribe to help to defray these costs. If the NURSING RECORD, as the organ of the Nursing profession, will open such a fund, I shall be ready to subscribe ten shillings to it, and I know there are others ready to do the same.

I am, Madam,

Yours faithfully,

H. C. POOLE, Matron,

Member of the General Council of the Royal British Nurses' Association.

[We have referred this most kind suggestion to Miss Barlow, who desires to convey her sincere thanks to Miss Poole, but prefers that her fellow Nurses should not be asked to subscribe.—ED.]

THE ROYAL BRITISH NURSES' ASSOCIATION AND LEGAL REGISTRATION OF TRAINED NURSES.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

MADAM,—I consider the fact which has been published in the press during the past week, that the delegate appointed by the Executive Committee of the Royal British Nurses' Association voted *against* Registration of Trained Nurses, requires some explanation from Miss Wedgewood, the Lady Superintendent of the Royal Free Hospital, and, as one of the earlier members of the Association, I desire to publicly protest against Miss Wedgewood's action, as neither the members of the General Council, or the members of the Corporation, were consulted as to their opinion and policy in this important matter.

It therefore appears to me monstrous that a comparatively new member should, without our consent, pledge us as a body to an entirely new, non-progressive and mischievous policy.

I have before me the able paper written by H.R.H. Princess Christian, our President, and read for her by the then Hon. Secretary of the Royal British Nurses' Association, at the International Congress of Hygiene and Demography at Buda-Pest in August, 1894, and I feel sure that the majority of the older members of our Association were then, and are now, in warm sympathy with the policy therein expressed—a policy of progress, and appreciation upon our part of our responsibility to the community and our colleagues, the firmest foundation upon which to build up the profession of Nursing.

In 1894, our President publicly states to the world the aims and purposes for which we are associated, and upon the vital subject of State Registration she writes: "It is the hope of the Corporation that the time is not far distant when the State will see the importance of recognising a definite Diploma of Nursing, and of giving its official sanction to the

maintenance of the Register of Trained Nurses. Thus, those belonging to the Royal British Nurses' Association are endeavouring to follow the path of progressive changes in the great social developments which will always distinguish this century."

In 1896 we have a member as delegate from the Executive Committee publicly voting in the name of the Royal British Nurses' Association for the following resolution:—"That a legal system of Registration of Nurses is inexpedient in principle and injurious to the best interests of Nurses, and of doubtful public benefit."

In 1894, our President stated that we were actually engaged in carrying out the purposes and powers granted in the Royal Charter of Incorporation, among which we find in paragraph No. 4, "The promotion of conferences, public meetings and lectures in connection with the general work of the Corporation."

Our President also writes:—"The Corporation is now in process of establishing a complete course of lectures on those subjects, such as Elementary Anatomy, Physiology, Hygiene, Ward and Sick-room Management, and Invalid Cookery, which are necessary to prepare Nurses for their important duties, and will thus perform the part of a college for the instruction and preparation of those who may be desirous of entering Hospitals as Probationers."

And again, "Another sign of the times is the fact that while these words are being penned, a scheme is being inaugurated for organising a Volunteer Reserve of three years' trained Nurses for Army Service in time of war, a reserve which the Royal British Nurses' Association will hold in readiness for the requirements of the State at seven days' notice.

It is proposed that these Nurses should undergo special instruction in military ambulance work, and that when in active service they should receive the same distinctions as the permanent members of the Army Nursing Department."

That was the policy of 1894. Now I will briefly allude to the present policy of those who are responsible for the management of our Association, and which appears to me to be diametrically in opposition to the policy and reasons for which the Royal British Nurses' Association was founded.

In 1896, at the meeting of the General Council on the 10th inst., we are informed in the report from the Executive Committee that—"The question of inaugurating a further course of Educational Lectures was before the Council at the last meeting. It was felt at the time that the funds of the Association were not in a condition to allow of any expenditure being incurred for this purpose, and it also appears that, at the time the Charter was granted, the Association disavowed any desire to regulate and control the training and education of the whole body of trained Nurses. *The proposal has therefore been abandoned.*"

Although the Governing Body have sanctioned these lectures, yet the Executive Committee have abandoned them!

And upon inquiry concerning the Volunteer Reserve of Nurses for Army Service in time of War—a scheme which every patriot must approve at this crisis in our national history—I find that absolutely nothing has been done to organise the scheme, and that those Nurses who volunteered in July, 1894, have from that day to this heard nothing whatever concerning the matter.

For the last two years the Executive Committee of

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