

voting form is not a matter of sufficient importance to call for a formal condemnation on the part of the Royal British Nurses' Association, and, further, that it is the opinion of this meeting that Miss Barlow brought her action against certain members of the Association in the absence of definite information on a point which greatly affected her interests." (Loud applause.)

The CHAIRMAN: Does anybody second the amendment now proposed?

Dr. LOVELL DRAGE. I will second that amendment. I have not the pleasure of knowing the gentleman who proposed it, but he has so very fully expressed my own views on the subject that I need say but very little. I had hoped that Sir Russell Reynolds, at all events, would have stopped, so that we might have had an opportunity of prevailing on him to withdraw the resolution. In his opening remarks it certainly appeared as if he had come down intending to bless the resolution and had cursed it instead. (Laughter.) All of us who feel great interest in the affairs of this Corporation must agree with Sir Russell Reynolds' expressions of regret at these unfortunate circumstances. It is not the first time that there has been discord in this Corporation, and I feel certain that I shall carry the meeting with me when I say it must be the last. (Cries of "Hear, hear.") Ladies and gentlemen, it must be the last, because if these perpetual frictions and discussions are to be kept up, this Corporation will end in total failure. It is no great secret that your finances are practically no finances at all; the Association lives from hand to mouth, and it will only be by co-operation in the fullest sense of the word that you will be able to keep this Association going at all. (Applause.)

Dr. NORMAN KERR: Mr. President, I rise to a point of order. If any other amendments are to be proposed I have one which in due course I should like to propose, which is simply leaving out some words in the resolution proposed by the Executive.

Miss WEDGEWOOD: I think the rule that ladies should keep silence in churches and also in public halls is an excellent one, but I understand, sir, that you to-day ask the opinion of the Nurses on a question which is certainly a Nursing question. ("Hear, hear.") As a Nurse who was trained in two great London Hospitals—the Middlesex Hospital, and for many years a Ward Sister in King's College Hospital, the methods employed by Miss Barlow in these late events are incomprehensible. Not the least of the advantages gained by a long stay in these great Hospitals, is the opportunity of gaining the habit of implicit obedience and dutiful loyalty to authority. Without these qualities a Nurse can scarcely be useful, and she may be very dangerous. (Hear, hear.) I do not mean for a moment that anybody should ignominiously submit to injustice (cries of "Hear, hear"), but I do mean that we are all bound to be loyal to any Association to which we belong.

Mrs. BEDFORD FENWICK: To its principles.

Miss WEDGEWOOD: And that one of our first duties, if we are wronged, is to try to obtain redress within that Association, and not without it. (Hear, hear, and applause.) I suppose, then, as we have all promised to maintain the dignity of the Association, and to support it, we should adhere to our loyalty to the Association, to our deep respect to Her Royal Highness the President, and to our gratitude to those distinguished men who give so freely of their time and

substance to help the members of a profession which, although closely allied to their own, always must be distinctly subordinate to it. (Applause.)

Dr. NORMAN KERR: The amendment which I have the honour to propose, Sir, is very simple, and I hope it will be accepted by the Executive. I for one know nothing about this matter, and I cannot make up my mind now except that both parties are right partly, and that both are partly wrong.

The CHAIRMAN: The Executive cannot depart from this resolution, which has received the support of Her Royal Highness, from whom I have a message to read, and it will be impossible for them, therefore, to accept any alterations, so that it must be an independent amendment.

Dr. NORMAN KERR: Well, I may propose this as a new amendment.

The CHAIRMAN: Quite so.

Dr. NORMAN KERR: It is simply as follows, leaving out a number of words, "That this meeting desires to record its strong disapproval of any member of the Association resorting to litigation with the Corporation, or inciting or encouraging a member to do so until every possible means of settling the matter in dispute within the Corporation itself has been tried," and the object I have in proposing that as a substantive amendment is this, that we, in a very courteous way, and without pronouncing a strong opinion on either side, are able to record our strong disapproval of such indiscretion as has been committed—not intentionally. I, for one, after hearing all I have heard this afternoon, cannot wholly blame the Nurse, and I cannot wholly blame the Executive Committee. The position has been a very awkward one; it has *arisen*, so to speak, as far as I know; it has not been *made*, and if we start afresh from this evening, showing what we think of this proposal by such an amendment, without condemning any party at present, we should render it impossible for the future, because our strong desire ought to be, first, that every Nurse should have justice (hear, hear), and, secondly, that the Executive Committee should have justice, too. (Applause.) I, therefore, without any further remarks, beg to move that as a substantive amendment.

The CHAIRMAN: The amendment is practically identical with the resolution of the members of the Executive Committee, and for the members of the Executive Committee present I would say they fully accept it, but they cannot formally adopt it.

Dr. NORMAN KERR: I will move it, and if anybody seconds it, then it is a new amendment.

Dr. HEYWOOD SMITH: I beg to second that, and I think one advantage of the amendment would be that it would leave out all mention to any persons by name.

Dr. OUTTERSON WOOD: I have very few remarks to make, Sir, after the very clear manner in which the movers and seconders of the different resolutions have put their views before the meeting. When I was honoured with a place on the Council of this Association, I attended its meetings, and I took every means I could to inform myself as to the manner in which the work of the Association was done. I have been able to satisfy myself that the work has been well done, and I must express my strongest confidence in the Executive. (Cries of "Hear, hear.") With regard to unfortunate matters which have occurred, especially with regard to a letter published in a paper by a Nurse, the feeling of this meeting has already been

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)