

## Nursing Politics.

### A STATESMANLIKE POLICY.

At the Special General Meeting of members of the Incorporated Medical Practitioners' Association, held at the Holborn Restaurant on January 28th, the following resolutions were passed:—

- (e) That this Meeting, while fully recognising the evils connected with the work of midwives, emphatically condemns the dangerous proposal to perpetuate those evils, and at the same time to mislead the poor, by giving a State license to ignorant midwives in the shape of a Certificate of Registration. This Meeting considers that what is needed is to improve the education and efficiency of those in attendance upon parturient women of the poorer classes. It therefore contends that Parliament should provide as soon as possible for the due education and registration of medical, surgical, and obstetric nurses—a matter of vital importance to all classes of the community. And it requests the Council of the Association to take the necessary steps to obtain such legislation, and to oppose the suggested Midwives' Registration Bill.
- (f) That this Meeting strongly condemns the suggestion to enrol on the Register of Trained Nurses, maintained by the Royal British Nurses' Association, the names of asylum attendants who have had no general hospital training, on the grounds that this step would be most unfair to well-trained nurses, would inevitably deceive the public as to the nursing knowledge possessed by asylum attendants, and would destroy the confidence of the medical profession in the trustworthiness of the Register. This Meeting, therefore, hopes that this deplorable suggestion will be at once and publicly withdrawn.

We congratulate the Medical Practitioners' Association upon the statesmanlike attitude which they have adopted concerning these two important questions, and hope trained nurses will appreciate the interest of these gentlemen on their behalf and do all in their power to strengthen their generous support. It will be remembered that the Medical Practitioners' Association was the only body of the profession which supported the Royal British Nurses' Association in their appeal to the Privy Council for a Royal Charter in 1892.

### A POLICY OF INSULT.

The action taken by Mr. Fardon, the present Hon. Medical Secretary of the Royal British Nurses' Association, in proposing a resolution depriving the President of the Medical Practitioners' Association of his *ex-officio* seat on the Registration Board, has, we hear, caused much indignation amongst the members of that important body; and we are glad to learn that this last breach of good faith upon the part of the Hon. Officers and Executive Committee, will not be permitted to pass without opposition from the members of his profession whom Mr.

Fardon has so deliberately and wantonly insulted. The policy which has proved so effectual in getting rid of matrons with conscientious opinions, will doubtless prove less successful when dealing with men.

### THE REGISTRATION OF ASYLUM ATTENDANTS AS NURSES.

Amongst the letters received by Miss Wingfield in answer to her circular concerning the question of admitting asylum attendants, without training in a general hospital, on to the Register of Trained Nurses, there were six giving their reasons in support of the scheme, and it will therefore be of interest to consider some of these reasons.

The first is from a lady who holds a three years' certificate from a leading London training school, and now occupies the responsible position of matron to a Poor Law infirmary of 500 beds. She writes:—

"I am absolutely opposed to the admission of lunatic attendants to our present Register, but I should regard with favour the creation of a branch register for trained mental nurses, bearing a distinctive title. There is a precedent in the Register of Dentists, which is issued in a separate division of the Medical Register by the General Medical Council."

This lady has been quite misinformed; medical men took up exactly the same position with regard to dentists that the best class of trained nurses have taken up with regard to mental attendants. They therefore required that an entirely separate Act of Parliament should be passed, known now as the Dentists' Act, 1878, which authorised the registration of dentists upon a register totally separate and distinct from the Medical Register, and known as the Dentists' Register.

That is precisely what trained nurses demand. They are quite willing that any other class of workers should be registered, but it must be upon a register totally distinct from their own; and they hold that all who have not been thoroughly trained as nurses—whether these persons be asylum attendants, plumbers, or chimney-sweeps—have no right to be registered as trained nurses—that is the matter in a nutshell. The very illustration, therefore, which this lady takes, admirably proves our case. If a dentist wishes to be placed upon the medical register, he must pass through the five years curriculum, and obtain a medical qualification. If an asylum attendant desires to be a trained nurse, she or he ought to pass through the specified training of three years in hospital wards necessary for enrolment on the Register of Trained Nurses.

### THE QUESTION OF FINANCE AND CONTROL.

An Irish matron writes:—

"I am glad to see that you have tackled the financial side of this question of the registration of

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