

don County Asylum, Colney Hatch, who, in pleading for the Association of Asylum Workers, says: "There appears to be not only room for, but specific need of, a society of this kind." He draws attention to the Royal British Nurses' Association, which he calls the "Hospital Nurses' Association," and says that "Its members, while preserving each her individuality, and continuing attached in most cases to some particular institution or community, are members together of a federation, and this tends to raise their professional position, and enhance their sense of responsibility."

Mr. Hawkins then says that "it is much to be desired that a similar organisation should offer the advantage of association to as many of that populous community of asylum attendants as might be qualified, and desirous, to be enrolled." He does not, we observe, ask that the asylum workers should become members of the Hospital Nurses' Association, or be registered by that body, but thinks that "an equal contingent of efficient members from the staff of the numerous metropolitan and county asylums could readily be found to form the nucleus of a larger association," and expresses his belief that "the influence of wholesome association is invaluable." He also hopes that "the scope of the society may be so far enlarged as to include not only asylum workers, but also *private* mental attendants" who have had previous asylum training. The association has, he says, "a large community to deal with, to the members of which it proposes to offer not inconsiderable advantages—a bond of union, professional and social elevation, encouraging recognition as a body, and in their work, and sympathy and aid in the season of weariness and ill-health." It is manifest, therefore, that the association is ready to hand to undertake the professional control of asylum attendants, and this is as it should be. The asylum workers have every right to form an association of their own, and we have no doubt that it would be of the greatest possible benefit to them. This association will, in the immediate future, publish, as the Royal British Nurses' Association does, a list of its members. It is undoubtedly the body which should regulate the professional affairs of the asylum workers, and we hope that it will be supported and encouraged in its efforts to do this by asylum attendants themselves, an honourable body of workers, who, we do not believe, desire to pose as members of a profession to which they do not belong.

HOSPITAL REFORM ASSOCIATION.

An interesting meeting of this Association was held on Thursday, 4th inst., at St. Martin's Town Hall, presided over by Dr. Ward Cousins, of Southsea, at which the medical men present appeared almost unanimous concerning the necessity of reform in the administration of the out-patient departments of our great hospitals. Dr. Isambard Owen moved the first resolution:—

"That the wholesale, indiscriminate, and hasty relief at present administered by many hospitals in out-patient and casualty departments is demoralising to the community, detrimental to the interests of true charity,

unjust to the medical profession, and injurious to medical education; and that in the opinion of this meeting the time has arrived when the attention of governors of hospitals should be seriously given to the matter."

In the course of his speech he said that it was perfectly well known to anyone who had had any experience of unlimited out-patient and casualty departments that, in a great proportion of cases, the hospital was simply doing the work which ought to be done by the Poor Law administration.

Dr. Frederick J. Smith, of the London Hospital, seconded the resolution, and observed that there were numbers of patients who attended the out-patient department who made no honest attempt to pay for advice and treatment.

The Hon. Sydney Holland, Chairman of the London Hospital, said that at the London Hospital, the abuse of hospitals, of which people talk so glibly, hardly existed. He had spent day after day in the out-patient department, he had himself stopped every person who he thought was at all in a position to pay, and he was surprised, and pained, and grieved, at the absolute misery and destitution of the people who were brought there. He had never heard one word from Dr. Smith concerning the abuse of the out-patient department, although he had talked with him about the affairs of the hospital. They knew how ready people were to stop their subscriptions to hospitals, and he thought that responsible medical men, like those present, should approach the managers of their hospitals, and not appeal to the public by meetings convened by gentlemen unconnected with London hospitals.

Mr. Timothy Holmes, of St. George's Hospital, touched on the real evil, when he said that the abuse of the out-patient department lay in the unsatisfactory manner in which the medical staff had to do their work, owing to lack of time, patients being treated by a short consultation, and a great deal of physic, so that little result was obtained from a great deal of work. He ultimately moved the following resolution:—

"That, in the opinion of this meeting, the recommendations of the Hospital Reform Association for the management of the out-patient and casualty departments of our hospitals are deserving of the careful consideration of the governing bodies of the hospitals."

which was seconded by Mr. Brindley James, and it was carried unanimously.

This meeting, and the animated discussion which the resolutions aroused, are one more proof of the widespread feeling that many reforms still remain to be accomplished in connection with the management of our voluntary charities.

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