

Nursing Politics.

THE "NURSES' JOURNAL."

WE draw the attention of members of the Royal British Nurses' Association to the following statement by Professor E. W. White, in a paper on the "Evolution of the Mental Nurse." The paper is published in the February issue of the *Nurses' Journal*. Presumably, therefore, the views put forth in it are endorsed by the Editorial Committee of this publication. Speaking of male and female mental nurses, Professor White says "they are well versed in all the duties of nursing, both general and special, for they have passed three months in the hospital ward, containing on an average forty beds. . . . The time, then, must have come for their admission to registration as a branch of the Royal British Nurses' Association." The General Council of the Association, in spite of its facile disposition, has not yet passed a resolution that three months' training is sufficient experience "in all the duties of nursing, both general and special" to qualify persons for admission to the Register of Trained Nurses. What regulations the Council may pass in the future we are unable to say, but we would remind our readers that the Royal British Nurses' Association was founded on the principle that nothing less than three years' training constitutes an efficient curriculum, and that at present this period of training in a hospital of not less than forty beds is an essential qualification for admission to the Register of Trained Nurses.

We hope the members will not be misguided by the following statement made editorially in the current issue of the *Nurses' Journal*:—"When a resolution is placed upon the paper—(presumably the Agenda)—it is quite clear that the meeting may deal with that resolution as it thinks fit." This is most misleading. The bye-laws concerning resolutions are quite distinct and were sanctioned by the Privy Council; and we hope that the little game of "gag" in the public meetings of the Royal British Nurses' Association has had its day.

We wonder which of the reports of the late General Council Meeting is correct—that published in Mr. Burdett's paper, or the official account just sanctioned in the *Nurses' Journal*; neither probably—anyway, there is no resemblance between them. Mr. Fardon's heroics in denying the accusation of "stifling discussion" would be more convincing were he not backed by that significant array of members of the nursing

staff of Middlesex Hospital, nominated by himself on to the present Council, to say nothing of the Middlesex medical element, who are such docile supporters of their medical superintendent's most unsatisfactory conduct of business.

With one part of his speech we are quite in sympathy. "He thought there were many who felt how prejudicial it was to the Association that its funds, contributed by the nurses, should have to be (why *have* to be?) expended in defending the Association against frivolous and vexatious litigation."

Now, this statement is in true Fardonian style, and is calculated to mislead the members. No litigation, as far as we are aware, has ever been taken against "the Association." Miss Barlow brought her case against three persons, Dr. Bezly Thorne, Dr. James Calvert, and Mrs. Dacre Craven, for an unjustifiable threat to remove her name from the Register. The case was tried against those three persons, and they were in duty bound to pay the costs of the action in which judgment was given against them, which they have never done. The fact that Mr. Fardon and his supporters have sanctioned the use of the Association's funds to pay these costs appears to us absolutely indefensible—an opinion we have publicly expressed on several occasions, and to which no doubt we may have to refer again.

In the case of *Breay v. Browne*, Miss Breay protested against a gross injustice, and gained the support of judge and jury. On appeal she lost her case, but we do not find her shirking her responsibilities and asking the Association to defray her costs. Should any attempt, therefore, be made to divert the funds of the Association to pay the legal expenses incurred by Sir James Crichton-Browne we have no doubt that the members will express their indignation at the misappropriation of their subscriptions at the next annual meeting.

It is deeply to be deplored that the letters sent by representative matrons, to be read to the members of the governing body, protesting against the admission of asylum attendants to the Register of Trained Nurses, were not read by the Medical Hon. Secretary, as they ought to have been, especially in view of his following misleading remarks. He informs us "It was the aim of those to whom the guidance of the affairs of the Corporation was entrusted to extend the wise and beneficent purposes of the Association, and they were not going to be deterred because a meeting had

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