

PURPOSES AND POWERS OF THE CORPORATION.

(Extract from the Royal Charter of the R.B.N.A.)

'The Corporation may affiliate to themselves or amalgamate with themselves or enter into any arrangement for wholly or partially working in conjunction with any person or any body of persons corporate or unincorporate formed for all or any of the purposes for which the Corporation themselves are formed or for any purposes analagous or corresponding thereto.'

Then follow the letters addressed by the originator of the scheme, Dr. Outterson Wood, and by Dr. Strahan, medical officer of the Northampton Asylum, to the *British Medical Journal* on December 14th, and which we have already reprinted in fairness to these gentlemen.

FREE DISCUSSION.

We have always held that free discussion at the meetings of the Association and in the press is the indisputable right of every member of the Royal British Nurses' Association. How this just demand has been contested by the Hon. Officers of the Association, the cases of Barlow *v.* Thorne and others, and Breay *v.* Browne are proof incontestable. Free speech at official meetings, we are informed, will be demanded again and again until it is conceded; and the number of letters addressed to this Journal, and also to the medical and lay press, signed by members of the Association, criticising its management during the past year—and against whom no threats of removal from the Register have been made by the present Hon. Officers—has proved the right, and the determination to exercise that right, of free discussion in the Press upon the part of the Nurse members of the Royal British Nurses' Association.

We hold, therefore, that it is quite within the personal right of Miss Scott to state her views on this professional question how and where she chooses; just as we, differing from her on principle, choose to exercise our right to criticise the letter she has addressed to us.

In our opinion, Miss Scott would have acted more fairly if she had printed in full the letter from Miss Sophia Wingfield, to which she alludes, and also had inserted the letter from Dr. Biernacki, as she has printed in full the replies to this letter from Dr. Outterson Wood and Dr. Strahan, which appeared in the *British Medical Journal*.

THE CASE.

A proposal has been made by Dr. Outterson Wood to place upon the Register of Trained Nurses, and to admit as members to the Trained Nurses' Association, male and female Asylum Attendants who have received training and instruction in Asylums as *Lunatic Attendants*, but have received no training in a General Hospital as Trained Nurses.

This proposal has been considered by a small Sub-Committee consisting of Sir James Crichton-Browne, Vice-Chairman; Mr. John Langton, Treasurer; Mr. Edward Fardon, Medical Hon. Secretary; Dr. Outterson Wood, and Mrs. Dacre Craven, Nurse Hon. Secretary, who reported in favour of the proposal to the October General Council Meeting without consulting the Executive Committee or the Members of the Corporation.

MISS WINGFIELD'S ACTION.

Miss Sophia Wingfield, a Member of the General Council, addressed a letter to her colleagues, the Matrons on the Association, strongly deprecating the suggestion to place upon the Register of Trained Nurses persons who were not Trained Nurses, and also making public the fact that the matter had been irregularly dealt with by the Hon. Officers in ignoring the Executive Committee and the Members of the Corporation, and suggesting that in self-protection such members as were able to attend should meet publicly in London and discuss the matter.

As we go to press, the Meeting is being held, and will be dealt with, at length, next week.

MISS GEORGINA SCOTT'S ACTION.

Miss Georgina Scott has addressed a letter to every member of the Association, stating that she considers Miss Wingfield's letter "unfair, inaccurate, and misleading," and to prove her case states that by reading Drs. Wood's and Strahan's letters it will be shown that the admission of "Untrained Asylum Attendants was never contemplated, and that the interests of Nurses is in no way endangered," and then Miss Scott acknowledges that the irregular proceeding complained of by Miss Wingfield—of ignoring the Executive Committee—is true, and, we are glad to see, adds "that the final judgment must rest with the Association."

We are of opinion that Miss Scott's letter is *unfair* because she criticises Miss Wingfield's letter without reprinting it, and then proceeds to reprint at length the other side of the question as set forth by the originator of the scheme, and Dr. Strahan.

We think it *inaccurate* because Dr. Wood distinctly proposes to place upon the Trained Nurses' Register untrained Asylum Attendants—that is, Asylum Attendants, excellently educated no doubt in their own vocation, as *Attendants* on the insane, but *not trained primarily in General Hospitals for the sick, and secondarily in Wards for the sick insane, thereby constituting them what we term "Mental Nurses,"* a course of training which should be the ideal of all those truly interested in the care and comfort of

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