

understood it, she might be called to order by the Chairman. She therefore refrained from doing so. Dr. Wood had further stated in support of his scheme that the Royal British Nurses' Association was founded for the purpose of affording protection to the public, but Miss Wingfield held that if the scheme were carried into execution the effect would be directly contrary to this.

Dr. Wood's fifth plea was that the members of the Royal British Nurses' Association should show a wide and generous spirit to those who were well qualified for the special work they undertook, but Miss Wingfield was of opinion that even before this the virtues of "justice, mercy and truth" should find a place. *Justice* to trained Nurses, in keeping their Register what it professes to be. *Mercy* to those fully trained Nurses who might be injured in the earning of their daily bread. *Truth* to the whole Corporation, to the public, and to Mental Nurses themselves.

In conclusion, Miss Wingfield expressed the hope that in this Commemoration Year of our Queen all differences in the Association might be amicably arranged, and all members join together, as heretofore, to carry out the work and aims of the Association to the letter of the Charter, its Bye-laws and Regulations. She hoped that Her Royal Highness, Princess Christian, the President of the Association, would understand that the course pursued by the Meeting in this matter, though it might appear to be for the sake of opposition, was not really so, but only to try to gain for the Corporation justice, and a right understanding about matters which are of such vital importance to all trained Nurses. (Applause.)

Miss Wingfield concluded by proposing the resolution.

MRS. CHARLES HUGHES SECONDS THE RESOLUTION.

Mrs. Charles Hughes, of Manchester, member of the General Council, in seconding the Resolution, said that she had come up specially from Manchester for the purpose of doing so, as she felt very strongly indeed the importance and danger of the crisis into which the resolution of the Council had plunged the Association, and that the very foundations of the Royal British Nurses' Association seemed to be undermined, and its value and virtue threatened with destruction.

Mrs. Hughes then explained that she held these views because the proposal, resented by so many members, was nothing less than one to admit into an Association composed *entirely* of those who have been trained to nurse *sick* people, a body of persons who have *not* been

trained to nurse the sick, but who are engaged in entirely different work for which they have been trained in an entirely different way!

Mrs. Hughes stated that the title of Royal British Nurse had now attained to a definite value, not only in the estimation of medical men, but also among the general public, for the reason that the Association had so far carried out rigidly the fundamental principles laid down by it at its foundation.

The standard of the Association which was determined upon after much consideration by its founders, and which now was recognised by most Training Schools as the minimum of a Nurse's education, was that no one should be admitted as a member who had not been trained for three years in Hospitals of not less than forty beds, and that *at least* a year of this time must have been spent in a *General Hospital*. No amount of special work, in any branch, whether monthly nursing and midwifery, attendance on epilepsy and paralysis, no training in massage, or in the nursing of fevers, had hitherto been allowed to qualify for membership unless a general training had also been received. It was quite clear, therefore, that the proposal to admit Asylum Attendants to the Register, merely because they were *qualified* Asylum Attendants, struck a blow at the vital principle of the Association.

Mrs. Hughes then proceeded to inquire what reason had been given why this revolutionary change suggested by the Council should be adopted, and said that, strange as it might appear, *no* reason had been given, and no hint been made of advantage to the members of the Association; and further, that there was no deep or widespread desire on the part of Asylum Attendants to be affiliated with the Royal British Nurses' Association; on the contrary, there was evidence that they were as much surprised as the members of the Association at the proposed combination.

No reasons having been assigned, Mrs. Hughes proceeded to seek for them, and stated that the scheme had probably originated in the desire of some well-meaning but mistaken persons to obtain additional entrance fees, for it had been whispered, and more than whispered, that the Association was in need of money.

Financial embarrassment drove people to strange devices, and would often explain very queer conduct. Mrs. Hughes thought that the unprofitable expenditure might have had much to do with the launching of this scheme—which she described as preposterous—and which virtually meant that the members were invited to sell their principles, and wreck the reputation of the Association for a little ready cash.

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