

## Letter from Holland.

### THE NEW DUTCH NURSES' ASSOCIATION.

The Dutch Association for furthering the interests of male and female nurses has recently held its general meeting in Amsterdam.

In his opening speech, the Chairman, Dr. C. F. Schreve, complained of the objections and suspicions that had arisen with regard to the new association, not only in the Dutch nursing world, but also with the lay public.

The preliminary Board of Management, charged in the constituting meeting of May 30th with the projecting of a scheme of regulations, had received many proofs of warm sympathy. On the other hand, however, a great number of prejudices have manifested themselves, and by the influence of false ideas and interpretations many nurses are as yet unwilling to join the young association. "But," the chairman continued, "we only have a feeling of gratitude towards those rash, malevolent or ill-informed persons, for by their attacks they have fixed the general attention on our association." Time will show, said Dr. Schreve, whether the founding of this association by 40 nurses on May 30th of this year has been an action, that is worthy of sympathy and support or not, and whether the device of our brave ancestors "Union gives strength" is not by far preferable to the dangerous motto "Divide and reign" that is sometimes brought into practice with regard to our male and female nurses. Union gives strength! The truth of this saying has been proved by the history of social life. In the hard struggle for life the individual must irrevocably perish, and vanish in the boiling and tossing ocean of men, and from this fact arises the necessity for co-operation—a necessity as deeply felt in our country as by other nations. And, since it is acknowledged by everyone that sick nursing is a *trade*, and not only a vocation, it is a matter, of course, that all those who have devoted their lives to this noble and most honourable work should join themselves into one common band in order to further their common interests, now and in the future, to raise the standard of nursing."

The Chairman closed his speech by expressing his most fervent hope that the Dutch Nurses' Association would prove to be a blessing to the poor, sick, and suffering members of humanity, and keep itself free from any *political colour*.

After the reading of the report concerning the meeting of May 30th, the chairman informed the assembly of the fact that 240 nurses had already expressed their sympathy with the young association, and that pecuniary support had been promised by private persons.

The projected regulations were largely discussed. The most important articles are the following:—

The Association aims to unite the male and female nurses in Holland into one common band and to further their interests in all ways.

It tries to attain this end by

(a) The organisation of meetings, where mutual interests are discussed.

(b) The publishing of a special organ and other writings, and the founding of a library.

(c) The establishing of central offices for addresses.

(d) The founding of pension funds and funds for pecuniary support in cases of sickness and ill-health, in behalf of its members.

(e) The building of homes for sisters.

(f) Co-operation with other associations with a similar aim.

After a lively discussion the projected regulations were accepted by the assembly with only a few modifications. The preliminary Board of Management will ask for the Royal Charter.

The Association is to be managed only by male and female nurses, supported by a Council of Advice.

The journal of the Dutch Nurses' Association is to be edited by Dr. Aletrino. A Commission, that is to be formed by the preliminary Board of Management, will project proposals concerning the central address-offices, the pension funds, &c. The preliminary Board of Management consists of the following members: Dr. C. F. Schreve, chairman; Mrs. J. Aletrino-Van Stockum, first secretary; Mrs. J. A. Schreve-Yzerman, second secretary; Dr. Menks, treasurer; Miss M. Debrus; Mrs. S. Wiardi Beckman-Kuenen; Mr. J. H. H. Siestrop; Miss T. Beckhuis, and Dr. A. Aletrino.

"HOLLANDIA."

## From the Front.

South Africa.

DEAR EDITOR,—My promise to let the readers of the RECORD know of our doings in South Africa, has, I fear, been very "pie crusty"; for months after I came out, I was simply too tired when off duty to write—now things have quietened down, one has time to review the situation. Of course we have been greatly exercised in our minds about the excitement caused by Mr. Burdett-Coutts and the arrival in South Africa of a Commission of Enquiry, weeks after matters had entirely changed, and time had been given to get our house in order. Many Sisters are very indignant at the accusations. I am not—and I think if all the sisters engaged in nursing the sick and wounded in this war would go in a body to the War Office upon our return, and frankly own that they have done their best under very difficult circumstances, but that the whole system of army nursing is obsolete and requires re-organisation, it would be a good thing for our poor soldiers in future wars, but it is so difficult to get human beings to be actuated by any emotion stronger than vanity—as in the days of the preacher—so in our own day.

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Many of the regular sisters of the Army Nursing Service complain bitterly of the many unsuitable women sent out on the Reserve. You will doubtless have heard much as we have of engagements and giving in marriage, but perhaps much of that foolery evaporates before reaching England.

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We have felt the need of a firm professional hand at the helm, and the suggestion made in the RECORD of having a Nursing Department at the War Office, with a trained Chief Nurse working with the Medical Director General, is highly approved here.

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