

British Nurses' Association was founded with the view of giving to our profession the opportunity of voicing its views on this and other questions of professional and public importance; and had the founders of this Association not been removed by the medical hon. officers, no doubt by this time public opinion would have been educated, and wide support would have been given to the policy of the Matrons who were taking active steps to effect reforms to secure to the public efficiently educated nurses, and to certificated nurses the work and fees to which their knowledge entitled them.

We have, however, only to take up the official organ of the Royal British Nurses' Association for this month to see how the interests of the nurses are undermined by the present management. Half a page of the cover of this publication is taken up by the advertisement of a private nursing institution attached to a large London Hospital which sends out nurses in their third year of training, and the Committee of this institution, so far as we can gather, has not yet formulated any regulation directing that pupils, even before the expiration of two years, should not be sent out to the public as "thoroughly trained" nurses. The excuse may be that they certify their nurses as trained after two years' service, but this excuse cannot be accepted as justifiable by nurses of experience when the fact remains that this is the only hospital of any standing in England which still considers the two years' term of training sufficient.

Moreover by sending out nurses to private duty in their third year, they place upon the market a large number of women in competition with those who hold a superior qualification, and by so doing compete unfairly with those nurses who have attained to the standard now considered essential.

That the journal of the Royal British Nurses' Association should be utilized to advertise institutions maintaining an inadequate standard, and to undersell the three years' certificated private nurse in the metropolis, is only one more "blazing indiscretion" upon the part of the medical men who control its management. It is also noteworthy that women are sent out by the Chartered Nurses' Society, under the patronage of this Association, who do not hold a three years' certificate of training, to add most unfairly to the cut-throat

competition. Thus this Association, which should be foremost in maintaining a high standard of nursing education and the prestige of nurses, helps in practice to depreciate their educational standard, their professional status, and their financial stability.

Those Matrons who accord to this Association the support of their names fail, we feel sure, to realize the vital importance of opposing the present policy of the Association, which is to utilize it entirely for philanthropic, to the exclusion of professional purposes. In our opinion it is wiser, and more just, to regulate the status and professional position of any woman worker, and to aim at obtaining for her an adequate education, and a living wage, so that with thrift and industry she may be enabled to earn sufficient to secure a competency for her old age, than to bolster her up in an insecure and impoverished condition, thus making her position in the body politic that of a dependant and pauper instead of a self-respecting, self-dependent worker.

We were rejoiced to observe in the United States that the aim of the large body of nurses there is to secure for themselves the honourable position of self-respecting members of a recognized profession, and we gathered that the Federation of Nurses intends to do all in its power to place the profession of nursing on a sound financial basis, and will decline to tolerate any suggestion that women adopting this honourable profession should be classed among the non-self-supporting pauperized classes. This attitude deserves admiration and imitation.

Annotation.

A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY.

At a Special General Court of the Governors of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, held recently, a resolution was passed electing the Duke of Cornwall and York (soon to be Prince of Wales) a Governor, and subsequently President of the hospital in succession to the King, an office which he had held for thirty-four years, and which he only relinquished on his accession to the Throne. His Majesty afterwards honoured the institution by becoming its Patron, a position which had never previously existed.

The Court next proceeded to consider a circular letter of the members of the medical

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)