

more businesslike footing consistent with the growth of the Co-operation.

At the close of the meeting the nurses expressed their approval and entire satisfaction with the new draft Constitution.

It is intended to have a Special General Meeting of the members of the Co-operation for the purpose of confirming [the meeting should be called to consider, not confirm.—Ed.] the proposed Constitution at an early date. The Committee will be pleased to consider any observations you may have to offer after you have perused the draft. An addressed envelope is enclosed.

In name of the Executive Committee,  
DAVID NEWMAN, M.D., Chairman.

18, Sardinia Terrace, Glasgow, W.,  
January 22nd, 1903.

We have now before us the present and the draft Constitutions of the Glasgow and West of Scotland Co-operation for Trained Nurses, and we have no hesitation in stating that, taken as a whole, the draft Constitution is dangerous to the personal liberty of the nurse-members, as it places absolute power in the hands of the Executive Committee, on which they have only four votes to "at least" thirteen.

Moreover, the regulations governing the conduct of business at the Executive Committee provide for its immunity from all responsibility for any irregularities which it may purposely perpetrate. The wording of many of the regulations is specious, disingenuous, and intolerable. Any nurse-member accepting work under such a Constitution would place herself in an absolutely false and defenceless position, and had we not experienced the same tactics upon the part of the hon. officers of the Royal British Nurses' Association in re-drafting the By-Laws of our Chartered Corporation, thereby depriving the nurse-members of all power and personal liberty in their own Association, we could not have conceived it possible that so outrageous a Constitution could be put forward for the management of a trained nurses' co-operation.

Although invited to do so, we scarcely think that, having regard to the attitude of the Executive Committee in relation to the proposed Constitution, the nurses will prejudice their position on the staff by writing to the Secretary disapproving of any of its provisions.

We regret that lack of space prevents our dealing in detail with the clauses of the Constitution, but we shall consider it our duty to devote more space to this question in our next issue.

### Sewage and Shell-fish.

The London County Council at its weekly meeting on Tuesday discussed at some length the trouble relating to contaminated shell-fish, and eventually decided to approach the Local Government Board to press the Government to issue stringent regulations to prevent the contamination by sewage of oyster, mussel, and cockle beds in the estuary of the Thames.

### Legal Matters.

#### MISS CANNING AGAIN.

Once again, on Friday last, Miss Mary Canning, of 2, York Road, Hove, who has, on at least two occasions previously, appeared in the police courts in connection with the management of nursing homes under her care, appeared before the Hove magistrates, Alderman A. G. Henriques being in the chair, having been summoned at the instance of the Director of Public Prosecutions for unlawfully taking charge for payment in an unlicensed house of an alleged lunatic.

Mr. William Lewis, solicitor from the Director of the Public Prosecutions Department, the Treasury, Whitehall, prosecuted, and Mr. P. S. Carden defended Miss Canning, who pleaded not guilty.

For the prosecution, evidence was brought to prove that the patient under discussion was of eccentric habits, that she had threatened to take her life on more than one occasion, and that she suffered from melancholia and delusions. The defendant, who gave evidence, said the patient was attended by Mr. Nicholls, she was easily managed, and she (Miss Canning) thought she was quite within her right in receiving her. She was not aware of any law which prevented her doing so.

Cross-examined by Mr. Lewis, she said she was part proprietress of the premises and manageress. She had certificates from the London Obstetrical Society, and Queen Charlotte's and other hospitals. Here the witness objected to these questions as to her qualifications, but the Chairman over-ruled her objection, remarking that, if she kept a nursing home, she must prove her qualifications as a nurse. When pressed as to her qualifications for the care of mental cases she said she had "some experience."

Miss Canning also asserted that she was the "servant of the doctor," and the responsibility was his. She only had to carry out his directions. The Chairman, however, told her that the law placed the responsibility upon her.

Mr. Nicholls having given his evidence, the Bench retired to consider their decision, and ultimately decided to inflict a fine of £20, including costs, or six weeks. Time was allowed.

The feature in the case of chief interest is the ruling of the Chairman of the Bench of Magistrates, that if the defendant kept a nursing home she must prove her qualifications as a trained nurse. It is notorious that many flourishing nursing homes are run for gain by persons who have never had a day's hospital training, but this is the first time that we have seen the principle laid down in a court of law that the proprietress of such a home must prove her nursing qualifications. We note it with satisfaction, and hope that other magistrates will take up the same position.

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