

## THE ROYAL BRITISH NURSES' ASSOCIATION AND THE COLLEGE OF NURSING.

The meeting convened by Her Royal Highness Princess Christian of Schleswig-Holstein, President of the Royal British Nurses' Association, to consider the proposed amalgamation of the College of Nursing, Ltd., with the Association, was held in the Lecture Hall of the Royal Society of Medicine, 1, Wimpole Street, London, W., on Thursday, January 18th, at 2.30 p.m.

There were present on the platform Dr. Bezly Thorne (in the chair), Sir James Crichton Browne, Dr. Herbert Paterson (Medical Hon. Secretary), Mr. Comyns Berkeley (Hon. Treasurer), and Mrs. Campbell Thomson (Nurse Hon. Secretary), Professor Glaister, and Mr. Pitt, the solicitor. The Hon. Arthur Stanley was also present on the platform throughout the proceedings.

The Chairman, in opening the meeting, said that the members had been invited to attend it to record their votes on the most important question that had been before it for thirty years, namely, to consider the question of fusion with the College of Nursing in such a manner as to constitute one body. The project had been laid before them in the *Nurses' Journal*, and in the terms of the Resolution and he desired to add that their gracious President, whose absence they all regretted, the Hon. Officers, the Executive and the Council had weighed and pondered everything that could be said for and against the scheme, and had unanimously come to the conclusion that the fusion would be for the benefit of both, the increased dignity and efficiency of the nursing profession and the benefit of the public.

### AMALGAMATION.

DR. HERBERT PATERSON then moved the following Resolution:—

"That the Agreement dated the 21st day of December, 1916, for the Amalgamation of the College of Nursing, Limited, with this Association be confirmed, and that, subject to new Bye-laws being approved by the Privy Council, the Bye-laws of the 10th day of June, 1898, shall be annulled."

### A LUSCIOUS FRUIT.

He said that as they were aware, the Hon. Arthur Stanley had brought forward a scheme, at the beginning of 1916, to form a College of Nursing. At first it was regarded with suspicion by the Council of the R.B.N.A., but it was remarkable how the original germ, garnished and pruned, had grown into a luscious fruit. In this instance in the multitude of Councillors there had been wisdom. This ripe and luscious fruit was now dangling before their eyes, and he invited them to pluck it and make the Association a powerful body.

He was opposed to lay control, and at first was of opinion that there was too much lay influence on the Council, but, as now nominated, there were only two laymen. He thought they owed a debt

of gratitude to the Hon. Arthur Stanley for the energy and diplomacy he had shown in carrying out the scheme.

It had been objected that the Council was a nominated body. That was so in the first instance, but the members of the Council would eventually be elected by members of the College, and therefore if it were not a democratic body it would be their own fault.

Another important safeguard conceded by the College was that the right of appeal was secured to a member concerning the removal of her name from the Roll. They were not there, however, to balance their respective gains and losses, but to consider whether the proposed amalgamation was for the ultimate good of the Nursing Profession. The aims of the College of Nursing were the establishment of a uniform curriculum, a one-portal examination, and State Registration. These were the aims of the Royal British Nurses' Association, and he thought they might adopt the words of the Wedding Service, and regard the proposed amalgamation as providing for the "mutual society, help and comfort that the one ought to have of the other, both in prosperity and adversity," and was of opinion that the proposed combination would mutually assist them. He hoped before long they would see State Registration of Nurses an accomplished fact, and with it the adoption of a registered uniform.

One result of the combination would be that the opposition of the majority of the large training schools would be removed, also the two bodies united, and working together, would have greater driving force than if they worked separately. Union was Strength. During the present war trained nurses had, by their work, greatly strengthened their position, and rendered the nation their debtor. It was now time to close up their ranks. They should not adopt a policy of "Wait and See" but of "Demand and Get."

The Council had had the advisability of fusion with the College under consideration for many months, and the President had taken an active interest in the question. The Council, as they had heard, was unanimously in favour of the project, and they had got all for which they had asked. Mr. Pitt, solicitor to the Corporation, would be solicitor to the united body, Miss Macdonald would be the Registrar, and in that position would be responsible directly to the Council. She would keep the Register, and sign the certificates, and the private nursing staff would be kept on, on the same basis as before.

### A PRIVATE COMPACT.

It was not possible to embody all the conditions on which they had laid stress in the Supplemental Charter and Bye Laws. Until the R.B.N.A. and the College of Nursing had ceased to exist, and the Royal British College of Nursing had risen triumphantly from the ashes of both, pledges could not be given in black and white. But they had had a letter from Mr. Stanley and Sir Cooper Perry agreeing to their conditions, and he thought they

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)