

hoped that the College would provide a benevolent fund by which nurses could become independent." This may be a reporter's "bull," but the only means by which people can become independent is by earning what they spend, and not by charity doles, which inevitably sap self-support and self-respect.

Miss Cowlin, the assistant secretary of the College, said there was no need to advocate the College, because its principles were so good. They desired the co-operation of committees of hospitals.

The precepts and intentions of the College may be good, but of sound principles it is peculiarly destitute. It is not possible to build up a profession on patronage, privilege, and plagiarism, and so far these appear to be the only "principles" for which the College has become notorious in its short career.

### NOT PLAYING THE GAME.

The following letter has been sent to members of the Royal British Nurses' Association by Miss M. S. Rundle, the Secretary of the College of Nursing, Limited, presumably in the hope of absorbing members of the Royal Corporation:—

DEAR MADAM,—When applying for membership of the College of Nursing some time ago, you were advised that, being a member of the Royal British Nurses' Association, it would be wise to postpone your application until a decision had been reached in favour of the proposed amalgamation of the College with the Royal British Nurses' Association, in which case you would have become a member of the Royal British College of Nursing without payment of a further fee. You are perhaps aware that it has not proved practicable to effect this amalgamation, and should you now wish to become a member of the College of Nursing, I should be pleased, on hearing from you, to proceed with your application."

Surely this is not playing the game, from a British standard of fairplay! The members of the R.B.N.A. have already paid a fee for registration on a voluntary register, why, therefore, should they be canvassed to join a limited liability company for the same purpose? And why does Miss Rundle omit the word "Limited" from the title of the College, and thus fail to impress upon her correspondents that voluntary registration with the College Company can confer no prestige or legal protection upon nurses who pay a fee to join it?

#### THE DISINTEGRATION OF THE NURSES' SOCIETIES.

A fine sense of honour would, we should have imagined, prevented the College attempting to detach members from other nurses' associations, especially those whose work they are emulating quite unnecessarily. But the attempt in the past to disintegrate the Central Committee must, we fear, be recognised as the determined policy of the College, where the independent co-operation of trained nurses is concerned. It must be sapped and mined or smashed up. The Leagues affiliated

in the National Council of Trained Nurses are the latest objective.

Where they have influence the College Matrons are to urge the Leagues to support the lay administered College scheme and Bill, as against the National Council policy which called them into existence on self-governing professional lines, and through which they are affiliated with the great National Councils of Nurses which form the International Council.

Our advice to trained nurses is to claim their right of loyalty to the National Council, and to stand firm, in spite of threats by their Matrons.

### THE FUTURE OF THE NURSING PROFESSION.

A meeting was held on March 6th at the Women's Institute, 92, Victoria Street, S.W., to consider "The Future of the Nursing Profession," and by an extraordinary omission representatives of the Nurses' Associations, which have been working for professional organisation for so many years, were not invited to take part in the discussion, although a V.A.D. was apparently considered qualified to make suggestions.

Mrs. George Macmillan was in the Chair and explained that the object of the meeting was to discuss the question of how to supply the nursing profession with probationers drawn from the best types of educated women, and what the conditions should be that would attract them to take it up. State Registration was not to be discussed at this meeting!

Miss Escott, who spoke as an educationalist, said that she was convinced that most girls in the future would desire to have a definite profession. As a rule girls did not show any taste for nursing until they went to school, but there it often became noticeable from such incidents as a sick friend or a girl hurt in a hockey match and so on. She felt sure that more girls would go into the profession if they knew exactly what they were in for. At present conditions in different hospitals varied enormously. Although they were good in many they were not so in all. She knew as a fact that the physical conditions in some were impossible, breaking down girls who had plenty of grit and who were not afraid of hard work.

She thought it very important that educated girls should take up this work, and the question was how to make the conditions possible. The Association of Headmistresses had suggested the following essential reforms:—

1. A uniform standard of examination, so that girls knew what they had to work up to.
2. More scope in hospitals for individual life and self-development, and as a means to the end she suggested eight-hour shifts, and quoted a working man who, speaking to her of what was to happen after the war to the women who had been working during it, said: "Let them *stay* at work and thus shorten the hours for everyone, and then at last we shall become an educated nation."
3. Regular meal times and well-cooked food.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)