

Here are some ladies of the highest standing in the Nursing world, and some gentlemen of European celebrity in the medical profession, united together to ask the Crown to grant them great legal powers, not only for the benefit of their own callings, but for the protection of the public. There cannot be a shadow of doubt that they are justified in their contention. There cannot be a shadow of doubt that Right will prevail, and that they will, ultimately, be successful. But, when? That seemed to us the crucial question. For when they appeal to the Crown, it will ask, first, what professional feeling can be shown? and next, what public opinion exists? in favour of the proposed innovation. That was our argument, and, as we cordially and fully agreed with the scheme, we set ourselves the task, so to speak, of educating professional and public opinion upon this matter of Registration, and so forwarding the time of its advent.

We commenced by connoting all the negative arguments which were urged against the scheme, and considered each of these, in turn, carefully and dispassionately, logically proving, in each instance, that the objection was baseless as a dream. Then we discussed the positive aspects of the matter, and showed how greatly Registration would benefit, not only Nurses, but also medical men, and the general public.

We have the pleasing satisfaction of knowing that our efforts in this direction have been appreciated, and productive not only of a clearer understanding of the subject, but also of an increased interest therein. We shall continue our endeavours therefore, nor desist, indeed, from them, till the object which the Association has in view has been gained—till the Royal Charter has been granted, and Registration is an accomplished fact. But the matter has hitherto, to a large extent, engrossed our attention, as it has doubtless fully occupied that of the governing body of the Association; and so we have had little or no opportunity of defending that body from the attacks to which our correspondents allude. But, besides this, our reasons for not openly taking up the cudgels on its behalf were many and various, as we must now explain.

In the first place, we considered, and we believe rightly, that the Association was very well able to hold its own ground, and fight its own battles. We would here venture to recognise, with unstinting praise, the shrewdness, tact, business capacity, and, above all, the courtesy and forbearance under unmerited abuse and provocation, which its promoters have, from the first, so conspicuously displayed. As the outcome and practical fruit of this, we have seen the Association increasing in numbers and influence, week by

week, to an utterly unprecedented degree, so that now, within six months of its inception, we hear that it has obtained nearly one thousand members. We marvel at this success; but it only confirms us, of course, in our belief that the Association is quite competent to take care of itself.

But a still more potent reason has hitherto weighed in our minds against the employment of our pens as defensive weapons on behalf of the Association. We may, we believe, without any breach of confidence, divulge the fact, that on several occasions we have forwarded to the Hon. Secretaries of the Association certain information—printed and epistolary—which came before us, showing the bitter attacks made upon that body, and always directly or indirectly emanating from one quarter. To that, we have received each time an almost stereotyped reply. "The gentleman in question is a person whose importance is only apparent to himself. He has succeeded admirably in proving his chaotic ignorance of Nurses and Nursing. The Association has something better to do than advertise or educate him. Therefore, while thanking you for your courtesy in forwarding us the information, we do not feel justified in troubling the Executive Committee with it; and to our minds, such ignorant impertinence is best ignored." Our readers will therefore understand that we naturally felt reluctant to combat any other attacks upon the Association.

Once only it may be remembered, that a certain periodical—with a depth of logic peculiar to its pages—accused the Association of "wrecking the Pension Fund"; because, forsooth, this Journal and the *Lancet*, in pursuance of our clear duty to Nurses, pointed out the many weak places in that fallacious scheme. We then at once called our contemporary to severe account, and pointed out the fact which solely affected ourselves, and of which we knew its Editor was well aware—namely, that this Journal was the sole property of a firm of Publishers, and had no connection of any sort or kind with the British Nurses' Association. Our contemporary has not ventured since then to attack us, but finding that the Association made no effort to defend itself, has displayed the bravery one would expect from it, by again and again expressing its envy, hatred, and malice of that body of Nurses. But as so many of our readers, who are members of the Association, have expressed their earnest desire that it should be defended in future against such attacks; for their individual sakes, and not for that of the Association, for which, we need hardly repeat, we have no authority to speak, we propose next week, and in future, to call attention to those remarks of our contemporary which tend in this direction.

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