

Meeting of Members will be as pleasurable as the first birthday gathering last December. So it seems that in future we are to have a Picnic in the summer as well as a *Conversazione* in the winter, and to derive a good deal of pleasure at any rate from membership of the Association.

THE enemies of the Association make up for their paucity of numbers by the loud-voiced fury of their opposition. A circular letter, signed "A Hospital Superintendent," is now going the round of the country journals; but as no one seems to notice it, it will soon probably die a natural death. It is evidently from the same pen as the following, which appeared last week in the *St. James's Gazette*, and called forth the reply which succeeds it:—

Sir,—Having been at the recent meeting at Mrs. Jeune's house, and knowing something both of the British Nursing Association and the Nursing profession in general, I should like to offer a few remarks on the proposed scheme of Registration. The idea on which the scheme is based is, that the Nursing profession is in every way parallel to the Medical; that training in Nursing is very much akin to the curriculum of Medical education; and that Nursing skill can be as easily tested by examination as Medical knowledge. These premises are distinctly false. In a Doctor, tact, gentleness, and even temper, are, no doubt, desirable; but they are not essential to the patient's welfare. The one thing needful is professional knowledge—a knowledge which can be tested and proved by examination. From a Nurse we ask comparatively little scientific knowledge. She is not called in to diagnose disease, or to suggest treatment—in these matters her duty is simply to obey the Doctor, a duty which some of our Trained Nurses have either never learned or have forgotten. The use of the clinical thermometer, of which so much is said on platforms, can be learned by any woman of average intelligence in a very short time; and the use of the hypodermic syringe should not, in the opinion of many Doctors, be entrusted to a Nurse. But a Nurse must be both gentle and firm; she must have endless patience and endless watchfulness; she must have sufficient imagination to put herself in the place of patients of every grade and temperament; she must have qualities that can be perceived better than described, and which certainly cannot be tested by the best examination-paper yet devised. Many Matrons avow that their best Nurses do not by any means come out highest in the examinations. This is well known in the best Nurse Training Schools, and this is the reason why so many of them answered in the negative the question put to them by the Hospitals Association.

They are conscious that a Nurses' Register could not be relied upon as giving a list of competent Nurses. It must necessarily include many who lacked those finer moral qualities necessary to success in the noblest calling a woman can adopt.—I am, Sir, your obedient Servant, A HOSPITAL WORKER.

Sir,—It is earnestly to be hoped that your correspondent, "A Hospital Worker," is innocent of the most elementary knowledge of what the Registration of Nurses is, of its character, or of its effects; because he has most completely misstated the case in his letter in your columns of the 14th instant. I also have taken much interest in the British Nurses' Association, and have never heard the slightest suggestion made that the Association should institute examinations. Registration is, indeed, totally distinct from the question of examinations. If your correspondent considers these to be useless, he should take up his parable against "the best Nurse-training school"; for he will, doubtless, be greatly surprised to learn that these Institutions carefully examine their students, and only grant certificates to those who satisfy the tests they impose. But the object of Registration, I take it, is simply to place on a Register the names of those women who possess these certificates, and to remove from the Register the name of any Certificated Nurse who in any way disgraces her calling. The effect will be that the Register of Nurses published each year, and obtainable through any bookseller, will furnish the public with a ready and definite means of ascertaining who is, and who is not, a Trained Nurse. Does your correspondent venture to say such a system is not urgently needed? If he will refer to the leading medical journals for this and last week he will find the following extracts on the subject, which I commend to the earnest consideration of your readers:—"Its enforcement by State authority is probably within measurable distance. Medical men keenly feel its importance and urge its adoption; for by daily experience they know that there is no legal check against ignorant impostors palming themselves off as Nurses, or any means of controlling certificated women who prove themselves unworthy of trust. The public also is rapidly awakening to the great dangers to which the sick are thus exposed."—*Lancet*. "The utility of a legal Register of Trained Nurses by which the public will be enabled to distinguish qualified from unqualified persons in that important vocation is obvious, and we wish every success to any well-devised scheme which this Association may bring forward."—*British Medical Journal*. I am glad to learn that the public is so well aware of the importance of the work which the Nurses' Association

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