

standard of efficiency shall be by any arbitrary method instituted. Practically, the Superintendent of any Nursing institution is afforded opportunity of judging the character and qualities as well as the educational status of her Probationers; so she is enabled to recommend a suitable Nurse for a given case with a discrimination that the authorities directing a general Register could not exercise. So much for the question of training.

"I can, moreover, foresee a grave possibility of danger in the event of the project of a General Register for Nurses being carried out. It is stated that such a Register is to be on the plan of the General Medical Register. It is to be established by Royal Charter. The British Nurses' Association is 'to grant a certificate, and to confer on those whom it regards as qualified to undertake the work of Nursing, a status which no unauthorised person will be able to usurp.' This must mean that a legal diploma is to be conferred.

"I need not stay to discuss whether the Registration of duly qualified Practitioners of Medicine and the Registration of Nurses can be considered as similar questions. The answer is obvious. I simply ask whether there is no danger that, supposing the scheme were successful, the cordial relations which should subsist between patient and Doctor would be disturbed. I assume that at the present time, when a sick Nurse is required in a private family, the usual course of action is that the Medical attendant should be consulted. He recommends a Nurse from personal knowledge, or he sends to an Institution at which he knows the Nurses to be well trained. Is there no danger that if a Register of Nurses were printed and issued, the friends of the patient would in the first instance consult such Register and choose the Nurse, and the Medical Practitioner be thus placed in a somewhat uncomfortable position? And is there no danger that a still more harmful competition may ensue? A Nurse with a legal diploma is scarcely the same person as the Nurse the watchful servant of the patient and the obedient and trusted assistant of the Doctor. There are many among the public who would take no very particular trouble to investigate the difference of significance between the two legal diplomas, and the step might be a very easy one between the administration of medicinal means and the advising as well as administering them. These are questions which should be considered without fear and without reproach.

"I cannot trespass on your columns so far as to present a full exposition of the issues, but I would ask your readers who are interested in the matter to read the pamphlet of Miss Lückes and Mr. Henry Bonham Carter, Secretary of the Nightingale Fund ('Is a General Register for Nurses

Desirable?'), then to consider the strictures expressed in the *Nursing Record*, which calls itself 'the representative organ of the Nursing profession,' especially the numbers of June 13th and 20th, 1889, and to draw their own conclusions.

"I am, Sirs, yours truly,

"A. ERNEST SANSON, M.D., F.R.C.P.

"Harley Street, June 25th, 1889."

### NURSING ECHOES.

\*\* Communications (duly authenticated with name and address, not for publication, but as evidence of good faith) are especially invited for these columns.

MR. EDITOR asks me to state here, in reply to many inquiries on the subject, that he understands from the Secretary of the B.N.A. that Members of the Association can obtain tickets for the journey to Cambridge and the dinner there on the 31st inst. until the evening of the 25th. But it is essential, in order to make the necessary arrangements, that Miss Wood should have some approximate idea, as soon as possible, of the number of Members who intend to be present. Still, as I have said, even if a Nurse cannot be sure now of being able to attend the Meeting, any time within the next three weeks will be in time enough for her to obtain the final particulars, &c., from the offices. Speaking of these reminds me that I hear Mrs. Monkhouse's Bed Lift, which was exhibited at the *Conversazione* last December, is now on view at 8, Oxford Circus Avenue, during office hours, ten a.m. to four p.m. It is so ingenious, handy, and useful that it would well repay a visit of inspection from any Matron or Hospital worker.

EVEN if one were not somewhat prejudiced in favour of the Association, one could not help admiring the manner in which it is being conducted. This should comfort those Members who object so strongly to all the abuse which has been poured upon them from a certain quarter. By-the-bye, there is a rumour, though I cannot vouch for its accuracy, that one of these Members objects so much to being told that she is part of the "scum of the nursing profession" and that she "has taken refuge in it to obtain pseudo-respectability because she could not obtain it elsewhere," that she is "about to commence an action against each individual proprietor of the newspaper which published these statements, and the editors, printer and publisher of the same." While I firmly believe in the liberty of the Press, most people will think such assertions as these are most unwarrantable licence, and no English journalist,

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)