

an independent professional Journal. Then we would express our conviction that both the statements and the inferences of this Memorial are inaccurate and misleading in the highest degree. We have shown in this column last week how urgent a need there exists for some protection for the sick public against ignorant and untrustworthy Nurses, and how widespread a professional demand *has* been expressed for the institution of Registration to supply this need.

We ask those who by their honoured signatures have given this Memorial its chief claim to respect, to investigate the facts for themselves, and cannot doubt that they will be astounded to discover how they have been deluded in this matter. They have been induced to state their "surprise" at an assertion which is strictly and entirely true; then to countenance subterfuge and mere prevarication, evidently intended to blind the public to the real condition of affairs. "Those who represent the *largest* Nursing interests in the metropolis and throughout the country," are the authorities of the London Hospital. These undoubtedly are opposed to Registration upon grounds which are well understood in professional circles, and probably will in due course be clearly stated to the public. But the statement as it stands is wilfully misleading, because the promoters of this Memorial knew that the past or present Matrons of St. Bartholomew's and Guy's, of the Middlesex, Royal Free, Charing Cross, and St. Mary's Hospitals, and of half the large Hospitals in the kingdom have joined the Association in order to secure Registration. In other words, the weight of numbers and even of total influence in the Nursing world is vastly greater in favour of the scheme than against it.

It is, moreover, conclusive evidence of the feeble support this Memorial has received from the Nursing profession that only half-a-dozen Matrons of London Hospitals have been persuaded to sign it, and that two members of the Junior Staff of St. Bartholomew's Hospital have been induced to sign the document, in the evident desire to mislead the public, for the whole influence of that great Institution has, it is well known, been employed to support the Association. It cannot be repeated too strongly, nor too frequently, that this is a purely professional matter, which only professional persons can rightly estimate. We yield to no one in respect for several of the distinguished laymen, whose signatures appear upon this Memorial, but we have no hesitation in saying that in a Medical matter like this their names do not carry such weight as in social affairs.

But beyond these, who do we find signing this Memorial? A few personal friends and supporters of the Stock Exchange official whose

ambition it is to Register Nurses under his own control, and a sprinkling of most estimable young Physicians and Surgeons, holding appointments under Nurse Training School authorities. And let it be noted by all whom it may concern, that the most active movers in this Memorial against Registration by the British Nurses' Association are gentlemen who actually, within the last few months, have assisted their Stock Exchange friend to obtain legal powers to commence Registration; and they have gone so far as to announce at a public meeting, held only a few months ago, that if the British Nurses' Association failed in its efforts to carry out the Registration scheme, they themselves would, by means of these powers, undertake the work. Why they are, and have been, striving tooth and nail against the Association is, therefore, plain to the meanest understanding. We commend this simple explanation to those who marvel at all the pother, and heartily commiserate those who have been enlisted in such a campaign, and in such company.

But now we arrive at the four definite statements as to the harmful effects of Registration. Let it be remembered that these evil results are only foretold if this professional measure is carried out by professional people. It must be taken for granted that such evils were not expected from exactly the same system carried out by outsiders—and as part of a trade concern—or surely these same people would not have supported that so warmly. However, as to the damage which is to befall Nurses, Nursing, the public, and Medical men, from the enforcement of Registration, we would say that the burden of proof lies upon those who make such assertions. The system has been tried in many skilled callings and has been found of unmixed benefit. We cannot see that it could possibly have the disastrous results ascribed to it. And at the same time it is only right that those who assert that Registration by leading Medical men and Matrons is dangerous to all classes concerned should prove those serious assertions. It is no use in a matter of this national importance to make vague and random statements. Definite distinct facts, with chapter and verse for each, must be given.

We call upon those honourable gentlemen who have signed this Memorial, believing all that was told them, for their own credit to insist that this simple measure of justice is accorded to those whom they have attacked. But in simple justice clear answers are wanted to very clear questions. How will the Registering of Certificates given by recognised Training Schools to their Nurses in a book which the public can buy, "lower the position of the best Trained Nurses"? Has exactly the same system lowered the position of the best

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