

These protesting gentlemen were induced to express their opinion that "the enrolment of Nurses in a common Register"—the simple insertion of the names of women who have received Hospital certificates in a book—"would (1) lower the position of the best Trained Nurses; (2) be detrimental to the advancement of the teaching of Nursing; (3) be disadvantageous to the public; (4) and be injurious to the medical practitioner." It was shrewdly remarked at the time by a well-known layman, "Methinks they do protest too much"; and contrasted with the grave judgment as to the importance of the scheme now given by the body most capable of understanding the matter, and of rightly estimating its merits, the language of the protest seems vehemently coloured. The protestants concluded by hoping "that a final judgment upon this important matter will be postponed, until the views of those who are opposed to the aims of this Association have been expressed and examined."

Well, that was an eminently fair appeal to make, and it has been most freely acceded to. Five months have elapsed since then, but to our knowledge the same random and unproved statements are still being widely disseminated; but never one tittle, one scintilla, of evidence has been brought forward in support of the assertions made. Now, in the face of this grave pronouncement of the General Medical Council, we consider that the time has arrived for these gentlemen to redeem the pledge they have tacitly given to the public. It is fully time for them as honourable men to express their views, bring forward the facts upon which those views are founded, and let them be fairly and openly examined. We challenge them to do so, and we would add that we have now more than ample material ready upon our part to show these gentlemen how they have been misled in the matter. We have facts more than sufficient to explain to them, and to the public, why this opposition to Registration has been made, and how it has been conducted. For the sake of more than one great public Institution, we should greatly regret to make a tithe of our information public, because it redounds sadly to the grave discredit of their entire management. But it would be better by far that the truth, and if necessary even the whole truth, should be known, rather than that the present evils should be permitted to continue unchecked.

We now, however, would ask the Duke of Westminster—who, all men admit, confers more honour on his rank than it confers upon him—who is especially the powerful promoter of schemes of sanitary reform, how it comes to pass that he, who so strongly advocates Registration of Plumbers, could have been persuaded to threaten

his opposition to the Registration of Nurses? It surely will not be asserted that it is less important to have sick bodies efficiently tended than to have the pipes of our houses properly placed. We cannot believe that the Duke has been told that there are actually at work amongst us hundreds of semi-trained, or altogether ignorant, women, calling themselves Trained Nurses, and that no one can prevent them from so styling themselves, or check the enormous harm they work. Has he been told that there are scores of Certificated Nurses at work in our midst who, by drunkenness and theft, have again and again brought disaster to the sick and disgrace to their calling, and yet that no one can control these women, nor protect the public or the profession against them? We sincerely trust that he will inquire into this matter for himself, for he will find it one of national importance; and when he has found, as we firmly believe he will find, that those who persuaded him to sign this protest have not one single valid argument or proof to support their random assertions, we feel convinced that he will in fairness and justice seek for the important facts advanced by the British Nurses' Association upon the other side.

We understand that the General Medical Council has unofficially promised the British Nurses' Association all the assistance which it can unofficially give in carrying through the scheme of Registration of Nurses; but that it is, by reason of its own great duties, and accurately defined Parliamentary powers, unable to undertake any additional business upon its hands. It was stated many months ago, that the Association could not expect to receive any actual assistance from the Council; but the moral support and approval of this most influential body must necessarily be of the greatest value to it. Pressure upon our space this week prevents us from reporting and commenting at length upon the historic event for the Nursing world which occurred last Friday, in the initiation of the scheme of Registration, but to which we hope to be able to render full justice in our next issue.

IN infected places we get a disease, though we feel it not presently, so secretly our hearts are tainted by examples; as a man that walks in the sun, unawares, before he thinks of it, his countenance is tanned.—*Manton.*

THERE is nothing more to be esteemed than a manly or womanly firmness and decision of character. We like a person who knows his or her own mind and sticks to it, who sees at once what is to be done in given circumstances, and does it.

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