

years ago instituted an Annuity Fund for Nurses, to which her friends subscribed, and from which Pensions of £15 a year have ever since been given to twelve Nurses who are unable to work, and in poverty. Early in 1887, the gentleman we alluded to last week, speaking at a meeting of the Hospitals' Association, stated that Lady Bloomfield had come to him and expressed a wish to hand over her Fund as a nucleus for a National Pension Fund for Nurses. This was reported in the daily papers, and promptly contradicted by Lady Bloomfield. Time went on, and the capital of Lady Bloomfield's Fund, carefully husbanded and wisely administered, expanded to £4,000. Then last year, it appears that Lady Bloomfield and her Committee expressed a wish to affiliate their Fund with the Royal British Nurses' Association. But it was discovered that this could not be done unless the Association was legally able to acquire and administer Trust Funds as a corporate body, and so incorporation was decided upon, and for that sole and only reason. It was so apparent that the work in which the Association is engaged does not require it to be incorporated, that men wondered why it should take so expensive and apparently unnecessary a step. In three years it has gathered into its ranks a quarter of the whole Nursing profession; it has received and expended many hundreds a year; it has accumulated a very respectable reserve fund; it has carried through its great work of Registration, and issued its Register; it has initiated and maintained nearly all the other schemes which it had pledged itself to undertake. It has done all this without incorporation, and it is quite clear that it can continue to exist and to prosper without it. Then, when it was suddenly announced that a hole-and-corner meeting of a few self-elected representatives of Hospitals proposed—and for reasons palpably ridiculous and irrelevant—to oppose the Association taking this expensive, and apparently useless, step of incorporation, wonder grew into amazement, and most people treated it in the Dundrearyan fashion as "one of those things which no fellow could understand."

We do not for one moment blame the Association, in fact we greatly admire the wisdom of its tactics. It is quite clear now that it expected to be opposed, and therefore kept its own counsel, with the probably foreseen result that its opponents have quietly landed themselves into the most awkward predicament and dilemma.

Either they were merely acting as cat's paws of

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some one in the background, and were entirely ignorant of the real reasons why it was desired that the Association should not be registered under the Companies' Acts with the omission of the customary word "Limited," or they have been endeavouring to delude the public, the Board of Trade, and the other Hospitals which they secretly besought to assist them. At the meeting of the General Council the whole case was put into a nutshell. The Association only desires to be incorporated in order to receive Lady Bloomfield's Fund, and for no other reason, because for no other reason is incorporation necessary. It desires to be incorporated under the special Section of the Companies' Acts, which provides that bodies which are not business concerns may omit the word Limited, although registered as limited liability societies. "The addition of the word 'Limited' stamps an Association as a trading concern, and with such no member of the Royal Family can be connected. The object of the opposition, therefore, is either to prevent the Association becoming incorporated at all, and so prevent it receiving Lady Bloomfield's Fund, or to force it to be incorporated as a business undertaking, and so compel Her Royal Highness the President to retire."

We are glad to observe that the eloquent and influential speakers at the meeting spoke very strongly as to the persecutions to which the Association had been subjected, and we imagine that when the public comes to know the full story, very considerable indignation will be expressed. The Association needs no further pity: it has succeeded to a phenomenal degree, and an *exposé* of its opponents will probably give it another great lift. But we foresee grave troubles for certain Hospitals. Those who have used their official positions to give strength to their personal antagonism to a body of working women have, we fear, sowed the seeds of irreparable harm to the charitable institutions with which they are connected, even if they succeed in escaping odium themselves.

WE have received a copy of the new edition of "Home Nursing," by E. Margery Homersham, which has several important additions, and to which we hope shortly to allude further.

COPIES of the reprint from the *Nursing Record* of the evidence respecting the London Hospital inquiry can be had from the publishers, price one penny; post free, three half-pence.

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