

their care, to certify who are fit and properly-trained Nurses, and that the certificates of efficiency given by them are sufficient, and are infinitely more valuable and trustworthy than any certificates otherwise acquired could possibly be."

5. "That no Association having for its object to test and guarantee by certificate the educational and other qualifications of its members has ever yet had accorded to it such powers and privileges as the British Nurses' Association aims at acquiring, until it has been shown by actual results that its action has been beneficial to the public and to the body it purports to represent, and that it has the support of the leading members, as well as of the large majority of the rank and file, of that body. The large Nurse-training Schools of Great Britain, including the Nightingale School, to whose labours the vast improvement which has of late years taken place in the education and status of Nurses is wholly attributable, are, almost without exception, unrepresented in the British Nurses' Association, and are opposed to its Registration Scheme."

pensable. But it must be remembered that the certificates of the Nurse-training Schools are not indefinitely trustworthy; because they cannot be recalled or cancelled in the case of Nurses who, after having completed their training and left their Hospitals, may fall into habits or commit acts which would render them unfit to fill positions of trust. The Registration Board has power to strike such Nurses off the Register on the production of sufficient evidence of their unworthiness.

5. Nearly the whole of this paragraph is inaccurate. The Association does not "test and guarantee by certificate the educational and other qualifications of its members." The only "powers and privileges" which it "aims at acquiring" are those of legal incorporation, which are open to any seven British subjects on payment of certain fees. It enjoys the support of a large number of "the leading members" of the medical and Nursing professions, and in four years has been joined by one-fifth of the whole Nursing profession in this country. The names of the Members of the Registration Board will alone furnish a sufficient commentary upon the general statement; while it is an important fact that the most strenuous opposition to the Association has proceeded from Training Schools which are content with a shorter period of education than that which the Registration Board thinks it necessary to require.

The following letters have appeared in *The Times* on the question of the Charter:—

"Sir,—As, in reply to an inquiry addressed by us to the Lord Mayor, his lordship has informed us that the meeting to be held at the Mansion House to-day is one in support of the Royal British Nurses' Association, and not one at which the Nursing question is to be openly and publicly discussed, we shall be greatly obliged if you will allow the undersigned,

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on behalf of the authorities of the principal Nurse-Training Schools, who do not believe that the action of the Association will be of advantage to the public or the Nurses, to repeat the grounds on which they deem it their duty to oppose the application of the Royal British Nurses' Association for the grant of a Royal Charter. While taking this course, they cannot but express their regret that they find themselves in opposition to a member of the Royal Family, who has identified herself with the Association. These grounds shortly, are:—

"1. That such a system of Registration as has been proposed by the Association is, from the nature of a Nurse's calling, incapable of affording trustworthy evidence of a Nurse's real qualifications, and, therefore, of protecting the public against 'unskilled nursing by untrustworthy women,' and will, for that and other reasons, be injurious to the true interests of the Nurses as a class.

"2. That the grant of a Royal Charter will give to the Association, and to any Register established by it, an authoritative character, which will greatly enhance the weight of these objections.

"3. That the Association is unable to comply with those conditions which every registering or certifying authority in the case of those professions or callings which have obtained Royal Charters has been invariably required to fulfil; for instance, it has signally failed to secure the general concurrence in its objects of the Nurse-Training Institutions of the country; it has not the means at its command of obtaining requisite information respecting the character of Nurses; neither can it claim to be representative of the great body of Nurses, or of those persons, lay and professional, by whom alone the education and training of Nurses has hitherto been conducted, and who are best acquainted with their qualifications and requirements.—We are, Sir, your obedient servants,

"J. G. WAINWRIGHT,
Treasurer of St. Thomas's Hospital, and Chairman of
Committee of Representatives of Nurse-Training Schools.

"HENRY BONHAM-CARTER,
"March 18." "Secretary of the Nightingale Fund.

"Sir,—I hope that the public will not be misled by the declared opposition of the Treasurer of St. Thomas's Hospital and of the Secretary of the Nightingale Fund to the above Association. In addition to the very meagre grounds of opposition stated, will you allow me to add two?

"1. What is known as 'spretæ injuria formæ' in that these authorities of nursing were not consulted before the starting of the Association.

"2. There is connected with several of the London Hospitals a Private Nursing Institution, which will run great risk if an Association is successfully incorporated for the purpose of fostering the general interests of the Nursing profession, as one of its first acts will probably be the abolition of the middleman, whether in the form of Hospital Committee or of private speculator. As to the first point, it is in the power of any objector to join the Association and influence its policy. As to the second, the objection is no more worthy of attention than the cry of the silversmiths of Ephesus.

"I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
"JOHN H. GALTON, M.D. Lond., Member of the
Royal British Nurses' Association.
"Upper Norwood, March 19."

The Hospital Gazette remarks, after quoting Mr. WAINWRIGHT'S objections:—

"Which, being interpreted, means that, in their opinion, their craft is in danger. A system of Registration must be a better protection to the public against incompetent and

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