

had been constantly detected in theft, and yet were able, under cover of these very Certificates, to obtain fresh engagements. This had been going on for years. There was no possibility of checking it, although it occasionally gave rise to serious professional scandals and was fraught with great danger to the public. The Association affords the very means of stopping all this. Hitherto medical men have been more or less at the mercy of the Institutions, and have been obliged to take what they sent; but, armed with this Register, it will be possible to get a reliable Nurse. At the present time if a Nurse behaves badly and gets discharged from one Institution, there is nothing to prevent her being taken on at another, but under the Registering system this cannot be done. It should be borne in mind that Registration is a purely voluntary business—there is no compulsion about it—the Nurse need not Register and the public are not compelled to have Registered Nurses, but it may be taken for granted that before long all Nurses will be Registered.

To a scheme so simple, which was, so to say, all prizes and no blanks, which was voluntary and not compulsory, which might do much good and could do no harm except to the undeserving, one would have thought there could have been

no opposition. But opposition has arisen, and has arisen in quarters where one would have least expected it. To begin with, *The British Medical Journal*—not the Association—opposes it. This comes with very bad grace from *The British Medical Journal*. At a meeting of the British Medical Association, in August last, a resolution to this effect was proposed and carried: "That it is desirable that Nurses, medical, surgical, obstetric, &c., shall, in the performance of their duties, be entirely under the control of the medical profession, and that this Council be requested to consider and report as to the best means to attain this end." This resolution was opposed by the editor of the *Journal*, and he professed to believe that it was not proposed in a serious spirit. Well, the resolution was carried, and had the Council of the British Medical Association chosen, here was work already to their hand, but they appear to have done nothing. There is also opposition from some of the Nurse-training Schools. They pretend that it is useless; if so, it will die a natural death. They say it will lower the position of the best trained Nurses, and reduce them all to a dead level! They might just as well say that the position of the President of the College of Surgeons is lowered by the registration of the last made member. One

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"THE LANCET," Oct. 3rd, 1891.

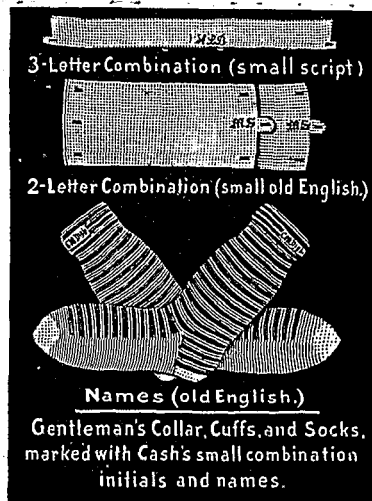
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