

Nurses protection against bad and incompetent Nurses. It would do that rather than tell the public who were the best. Personal knowledge of course, will always do a great deal; but the Association has already done and will do a great deal to save people from having incompetent Nurses. And the Nurses have sometimes had the most excellent acknowledgments of character sent to them. If the Association can do this, we are all right. If we can thus do something good, why should we be prevented from doing it. We do not, and we do not desire to, control either the time or the education to qualifying Nurses. All we do is to tell the public that any persons found on our register will have been trained, three years, or whatever period that may be fixed.

Lord OXENBRIDGE.—You have referred to registration as not compulsory. How do you propose to do? Is the register to be gone through, year after year, and purged and added to. Suppose you get an excellently trained Nurse, it may sometimes turn out that after a time she will lose her personal character. She gets her certificate of training and you put her on the Register, but the good character which she has when she enters may, by some unfortunate accident, disappear. How would you deal in such a case?

Sir H. DAVEY.—You could not knock off a person who made mistakes, but—

The Marquis of RIPON.—I understand you propose to fix the standard as regards the period—not in regard to anything else?

Sir H. DAVEY.—No.

The Marquis of RIPON.—Not in regard to the subjects?

Sir H. DAVEY.—No.

The Marquis of RIPON.—Solely in regard to the period.

Sir H. DAVEY.—Solely; that is all we can propose to do. Now we have to consider the cases of persons of doubtful character. Now, as things at present stand, there is no power to deal adequately with people of this class. It may be, as they say, that in many cases they keep in touch with the institutions in which they are trained. But how about those who do not? How about those people who live for two or three years in a hospital, and who get their certificate and then never go near the hospital again, and who, in fact, for reasons of their own, keep away from the hospital? How about those? We desire not to interfere with those who keep in touch with the hospital, but it is the ignorant and improper Nurses whom we wish to keep the public from. We say that we should be able to afford protection in that direction. If, my lord, our register is going to have this importance, and to have the authoritative character which our opponents attribute to it, that seems to me the very strongest argument in favour of the establishment of some register. But we are not ourselves so sanguine of that. We know that the medical authorities believe that the form in which the Draft Charter is framed—the form in which we desire to exercise our power—is scarcely in the way that would indicate that we desired to arrogate to this Association, in any shape or form, the power to interfere with existing training institutions. They say, the fact of having been trained in the Nightingale School, or in St. Thomas' Hospital, or in King's College Hospital, is so important that the register is utterly inapplicable because the Certificate of one of these Schools is all that is needed. If this is so, how can we take away from the merit or value of this state of things? St. Thomas', and the Nightingale School, and the King's College School will still carry on their educational work. I will assume that King's College has a higher education than other training schools. But assuming that it has a

higher education, nothing that can appear on our register can do them any harm. On the contrary, we are advertising it for them. If this is so, then the Nurse who appears on our register as trained in the King's College Nurses School—if she appears on our register and holds the King's College certificate—well she will get employment more readily than she would if she were trained elsewhere, and so far from reducing to a dead level all nursing, it will incite the different training schools to a more active competition with each other for the purpose of producing the best Nurses, for the public will be then—if our register is so popular as my learned friends fear—through our register, made fully aware of the different schools and different Nurses, and others to which the best certificates are given. My lords, the Petitioners at paragraph 5, submit that "such a register could not be made to supply the kind of information which is essentially required in the case of nurses for the sick, such as the possession of gentleness, tact, and presence of mind, and other personal and moral characteristics, without which no training can produce a good nurse." I entirely agree with them that no register in the world can do so. If you want information as to personal conduct of that kind, you can get that alone by personal recommendation. But I should like to ask—because it seems strange to me, that because you cannot always register the person who is so admirable in the nursing as well as in the moral department, because you cannot make it a perfect register of every quality—why should you not register the qualities can? We can register that A. B., has got a certificate from King's College, but I agree that you cannot register that A. B. is a sweet-tempered person of a high moral character. But my lords, one would like to ask under the present system where there is no register at all, how are you to know if a person who is admitted to have been technically trained as a nurse possesses all those moral qualities so essential for the office. She has been trained, say at King's College Hospital, which she left ten years ago and she has never been there since. What knowledge have you of her sweetness of temper, gentleness, tact and presence of mind. And, therefore, when we are told that because we cannot register presence of mind, tact, judgment and good manners, that therefore we should have no register at all, it seems to me rather absurd. Then, at paragraph 6, we are told: "Your petitioners further submit that the establishment of such a register as contemplated by the draft charter, would form (amongst others) the reasons stated in paragraphs 7, 8 and 9 hereof be detrimental, not only to the general body of nurses, but also to the public and the medical profession." I think, however, that the best argument against that view is that the medical profession do not think so, because a large number of medical men support the incorporation of this Society, whereas a more limited number are, with one single exception, connected with the nursing establishments which are opposing this petition. The next objection—paragraph 7—sets forth "The systematic training of Nurses is of recent origin, and although it has made great advances both as regards the number of hospitals and infirmaries in which it is carried on, and as regards the extent and quality of the training required, it is still in process of growth. Much longer experience than is at present available, and a very considerable development in the means of training, is necessary before any general concurrence of opinion as to what should be considered an adequate training for a nurse can possibly be arrived at. Until such concurrence of opinion is obtained, it would, as your petitioners submit, be premature to establish a central body with exceptional powers of controlling

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