

contact between this movement and that which has been so long continued on behalf of the medical profession, viz., the registration of that great body of educated gentlemen, whose duty it is to attend to the misfortunes in accident and disease of this great community. Now Nurses come exactly in that category, and although I was obliged to express unwillingness on the part of the General Medical Council to take charge of what seemed to be a great labour looming in the distance, it was simply because I saw the movement for the registration of Nurses would be so exhausting, would require so much labour, that I felt compelled unwillingly to say, as President of the Council, that we could not very well undertake the additional work. My advice, therefore, was most urgent that the registration of Nurses should be a separate act. I calculated there were upwards of twenty thousand Nurses of whom we have already two thousand five hundred—and many more Midwives, who desire registration, and I contemplated with a certain degree of horror the responsibility of registering all these persons at the Medical Council, and of being responsible for such disciplinary action as might be unhappily necessary in the future, in the matter of expurgating that Register. But I am happy to say it is with the greatest satisfaction that I find that the Register is to be established." This closed the question of the Registration of Nurses being undertaken by the General Medical Council; but further inquiries showed that this body could not, under its legal and statutory powers, undertake this work, even if it had been inclined to do so.

It had now, as we have previously pointed out, become known to the Committee of the British Nurses' Association that while, on the one hand, they must expect a large amount of very active and not altogether scrupulous opposition from those who objected to reforms being made in the nursing world; on the other hand, they need not expect more than a very passive assistance from the remaining Hospitals in the United Kingdom. But it was very wisely determined to make this latter fact quite clear before any further step was taken, so that thereafter the hands of the Association might be quite free; and

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at the same time it was decided that the scheme of the Association should be formally submitted to the General Medical Council. It was somewhat difficult to take this latter step, inasmuch as it was a matter with which the Council had no concern. But, finally, this step was taken by the presentation to the Council in November, 1889, of the following Memorandum, ending with the formal request for advice on the medical question, so as to bring the document within its purview.

BRITISH NURSES' ASSOCIATION,
8, OXFORD CIRCUS AVENUE,
OXFORD STREET, W.,
November, 1889.

MEMORANDUM.

A GENERAL REGISTRATION OF MIDWIVES AND NURSES.

1. The value of skilled attendance upon women during and after labour, and in the treatment of accident or disease, is generally admitted.

2. It would, therefore, seem to be of prime importance that persons who undertake the duties of Midwife or Nurse should be qualified to discharge their respective duties efficiently; and, moreover, it would certainly be well that they should be under some professional control.

3. As a well-known fact, however, at present any woman, although she may be destitute of knowledge or of moral character, or of both, can without let or hindrance term herself a Trained Midwife or Nurse, can obtain employment in either capacity, and bring about much danger to the sick, and discredit to the calling. Nor is there any means of preventing any Certificated Midwife or Nurse who by drunkenness, theft, or even graver offences, has proved herself unworthy of trust, from again and again bringing disgrace to her fellow-workers, and upon the Institution whose Certificate she is, nevertheless, able to produce.

4. To meet these undoubted evils the British Nurses' Association suggests that a system of Registration of Trained Midwives and Nurses should be carried out, and to that end has proposed the following scheme:—

(a.) That a Registration Council should be formed, to which every Training School for Midwives and Nurses in the United Kingdom might be invited to send one member of its

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