

of the Corporation was held under the Royal Charter, the progress of the Association was continuously successful. During the whole of those five years, the Association was bitterly opposed, for personal reasons which have been often explained, by Sir Henry Burdett, the editor and the chief proprietor of the *Hospital* newspaper, a fact which must be remembered because it will be found, at the forthcoming public inquiry to possess the greatest significance, and to afford a full and sufficient explanation of much which has seemed to some to be hopelessly obscure. During the five years referred to, the Association had commenced and carried out various valuable schemes for nurses. It had commenced a series of Lectures on nursing subjects during the winter; it had formed and awarded two Pensions to destitute members; it had compiled, in the face of the greatest difficulties and opposition, a voluntary Register of Trained Nurses upon which it had enrolled more than 2000 names. It had commenced a Quarterly Journal which was sent free to every member; and it afforded each year benevolent assistance to those of its members who required such help.

It carried on all this work successfully, although, for the last two years of the period referred to, its time was almost wholly occupied, first, in applying to the Board of Trade for a license to omit the word "Limited," after its name, if it became incorporated under the Companies Acts, and next, when the Board of Trade refused this petty privilege, in the appeal to Her Majesty's Privy Council for a Royal Charter. The fact that the Board of Trade refused to an Association, presided over by a member of the Royal Family, a little concession accorded to insignificant and unknown bodies every year, is an excellent proof of the virulent opposition to which the Association was subjected, in its early days. And that the Association was successful in gaining the high honour of a Royal Charter, in the face of such active and powerful opponents, is the highest tribute which could be paid to the excellence of its cause and of its management. Beyond all this, however—beyond the important schemes which it commenced and carried on—the Association was so economically managed that during the five years in question it saved from its small income more than £900, and thus was able to defray at once the great expenses incurred in fighting for the Royal Charter. These

facts are indisputable, and it is impossible to minimize their significance as proofs of the success and good management of the Association from 1888 to 1894.

The constitution adopted by the Association when it was founded, had worked so smoothly and well, that the first Bye-Laws were incorporated, part in the Royal Charter, and the rest as new Bye-Laws which were passed by the first meeting of the Corporation, and immediately sanctioned by Her Majesty's Privy Council in June, 1893.

The first points, therefore, which it is necessary we should emphasize are that THE ROYAL BRITISH NURSES' ASSOCIATION WAS, FOR THE FIRST SIX YEARS OF ITS EXISTENCE ENTIRELY SUCCESSFUL, EXCELLENTLY AND ECONOMICALLY MANAGED, AND MORE THAN SELF-SUPPORTING; AND WHEN INCORPORATED BY ROYAL CHARTER IT WAS FOUND UNNECESSARY TO ALTER OR CHANGE ITS PREVIOUS CONSTITUTION, AS DEFINED IN ITS ORIGINAL BYE-LAWS. AND DURING THOSE SIX YEARS, THE ASSOCIATION WAS CHIEFLY WORKED BY THE LEADING NURSES WHO FOUNDED IT. IT KEPT THE PLEDGES IT MADE; IT WAS RESPECTED EVEN BY ITS OPPONENTS; AND IT PROSPERED. When these principles were forsaken, as it will be our painful duty to describe, success became converted into failure. And this is the keynote of the story.

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### Annotations.

#### HUMILIATING FACTS.

WE learn from the *British Medical Journal* that male and female nurses in France are now required, before receiving their diploma, to pass a written and *viva voce* examination. The written examination is in anatomy, physiology, administration, pharmacy, hygiene, dressing, the care of women in childbirth, and of new-born infants. The oral examination consists of questions on important details connected with these subjects, and of a fuller examination on drugs and surgical instruments. The practical examination consists of bandaging. It will be observed that this curriculum is almost synonymous with that proposed by Mrs. Bedford Fenwick in 1894; but while, in England, no systematic attempt has been made to adopt the curriculum suggested, the French nursing schools are, apparently, carrying the scheme into effect.

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