

to be competent in the matter ; he had to show that he had a proper knowledge of his work before he could be legally qualified to undertake the care of the sick. Well, something of that kind was in their minds in regard to the Nurses. They wanted, first of all, to know that a Nurse had done her work in a hospital, and that she was fitted for her profession ; and she should not be allowed to practise as a Trained Nurse, unless she could satisfy a body, authorised by the State to investigate the matter, that she had a proper knowledge of her profession. Now, that was the first object of the British Nurses' Association. The association desired a guarantee that a Nurse had properly learnt her profession before she was allowed to practise it, either in a hospital or in private families. What they wanted was a Royal Charter, which should carry out and work out provisions similar to those of the Medical Acts. There should be a Nursing Council, composed of people competent to judge whether a Nurse was sufficiently and properly trained ; composed, therefore, of leaders in the Nursing world, and leaders in the medical profession—leaders who should be able to judge how long a Nurse should be in training, and what course of training she should pass through. That was what would be done by the Royal Charter. Many gentlemen interested in hospital work had said they were so much interested in the British Nurses' Association that they wished to join it ; but the association was to be a strictly medical body, composed of medical men and certificated Nurses. Now came the question as to Nurses joining the association at once. Some said, "I think we can wait a little while before we join it," and see how it succeeds, as it has not been tried before. But that would not do, because it was only by putting their shoulders to the wheel, that the object they had in view, could be accomplished. That object could only be attained by numbers, and that was the reason why she was so very anxious that all Nurses of three years standing should join the association, and that medical men should join, too ; because only by the union of numbers the strength would be gained, with which they could accomplish their work. But some might ask, "What good can be got by it?" Well, they must look outside the walls of a hospital to see that. Many of them were not in a position to see how much the Nursing profession was overstocked ; but those who had the engaging of Nurses saw that it was *the* profession of the women of today. The number of applications from those desiring to become Nurses was from ten to twenty times as great as formerly. So that they would see that the profession was becoming overstocked. Well, if it was overstocked with good material, they should not mind so much ; but to be overstocked with bad material, had a very bad effect. First of all, it had a bad effect in lowering the remuneration that Nurses should get for their work ; because,

naturally, if people could be got to work for 15s. a week, the public would not pay more. And how were the public to distinguish between a Trained Nurse and an untrained one? The present system tended to lower the standard of work ; because, after all, the public would decide this question, and would become satisfied with the lower standard of work. And this was a very serious thing for the public. In a hospital, there were people all round who would take care that the patients there did not suffer for a Nurse's ignorance ; but if an inefficient Nurse went out to a private patient, and had to gain her experience by the bedside, and at the cost of the poor patient, that was a very serious thing. And then it was a very miserable thing that they should be able thus to deceive the public, and to say they were Trained Nurses, when they were not trained.

If a doctor saw a Trained Nurse in attendance, he would very likely put more confidence in her than he would, if he were simply dealing with the father or mother or some relative of the patient, and, therefore, harm was done in that way. Perhaps the Nurse did not even understand the instructions given her by the doctor. A little while ago she had to send for a Nurse from a Nursing Institution, and when she came, she could not actually read the measure glass, or understand the temperature chart. Well, of course, if she had been sent out to a private patient, the private patient would have suffered for it. So they saw that the Nurses themselves would be benefited in taking this move, because it would clear out from their profession, those who were shams. Those who were in the hospitals did not see it nearly so much as those who were engaged outside. It would be a real pleasure to them to hear of the very great interest the Princess Christian was taking in this matter. There was no meeting of the committee, no assembly of any kind in connection with it, which she did not condescend to attend. Very keenly was she interested in this question, because she had a district of her own in Windsor, and very sad, she said it was, to come across these inefficient Nurses. This, too, was the first combination among women for the advancement of their profession, and that was another reason for the interest which the Princess took in this work. In the fore-front of the work of the Association she would put the Registration scheme. They must get the Nurses registered on a uniform basis. Then, if they did that, there would be other things spring out of it. They wanted to get up a sick fund for Nurses ; a holiday house ; a scheme by which, after the age of fifty, the savings of Nurses might be augmented, and many other things. But it was quite plain that, unless Nurses joined them, the Association would collapse, and come to an end. So it was not for Nurses to stand aloof. If the Nurses would combine, it would be done ; if not, the thing would be impossible. Miss Wood then intimated her

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