

of which the *Lancet* made merciless fun; while we ourselves, in our fifth number, criticised it adversely, and pointed out its feeble fallaciousness. However, the Report was sent forth to the world with the approval of, and after its complete adoption by, the Hospitals Association, who then and there, consequently, resigned all further efforts at registration, and all further right to interfere with the efforts of any other body in the same direction. But our contemporary—at that time, and previously, the recognised organ of the Association—has since then lost no opportunity of expressing its virulent hatred and jealousy of the British Nurses' Association. It has been unable to conceal its mortification at finding that Nurses were able to unite and protect themselves, despite its strenuous endeavours to prevent them from so doing.

Let us take only two examples of the envy and malice it so frequently evinces to the movement.

In the article, from which we have quoted, it speaks thus, with thinly-veiled bitterness and pique: "But the great world has something else to think about, and Government has something else to do, than to concern itself with organisations, which a year ago did not exist, and a year hence may have vanished into nothingness." We venture to predict that, twelve months from to-day, if our contemporary has not itself, by that date, "vanished into nothingness," it will find at least one-seventh of the Nursing profession, members of this wonderfully-successful Association.

The second example appears in our contemporary's latest issue, and we hand it to our esteemed contributor who writes the *Nursing Echoes* for discussion therein. We might quote numberless misstatements, and railing accusations, which our contemporary has from time to time brought against the Nurses' Association; but we have said sufficient to prove our contention, as to the animus displayed against Nurses in its pages. Especially has this been shown, week after week, in its opposition to the idea of a general system of Registration. Therefore, our amusement can be imagined at finding the sentence we have quoted above, following, too, as it did, at the conclusion of a wearisome diatribe directed against the adoption of the scheme. Let us then briefly dissect and examine this remarkable confession.

"If, in the course of years, it should be found that the general average of culture and practical skill is so high as to make a Central Register possible and desirable, such a Register will, doubtless, be established."

In the first place, then, our contemporary clearly and definitely admits, not only that a Central Register might be possible and desirable, but also that "it will doubtless be established." This is

exactly our own, and frequently expressed, view. Only we take an unprejudiced survey of the question, and we find that the acknowledged leaders of the Medical and Nursing world are united firmly together, for the first time in history, by the expressed belief that the time has *now* arrived for the formation of a Central Register to be possible and desirable. We draw from the fact of this united professional effort—the almost certain success attending which, the teaching of experience only emphasizes—the clear and inevitable conclusion that a Central Register will now, shortly, "doubtless be established." And then, on the other hand, we see a great and growing public recognition of the importance of skilled Nursing in sickness—a great and growing knowledge that, at present, the public is entirely unable to protect itself against any woman, however ignorant and careless, who may choose to call herself a trained Nurse; and a great and growing fear that many such women are now at work, doing infinite harm to the sick, by acts both of omission and commission.

And then, what do we find opposing this force of public opinion, this power of united effort? A few ladies and gentlemen, dreading the loss of their own petty authority, and quite unnecessarily afraid, as we have been at some pains to prove to them, in our eighth number. Behind these, and playing the part assigned in the old fable to the monkey, we find a small journal, as destitute of professional knowledge and influence, as of literary talent. There is the only opposition to the scheme; and small wonder, therefore, that common sense clearly concludes the certainty of the approaching adoption of a system of Legal Registration for Nurses. But our contemporary considers that there must be established a "high general average of culture and practical skill" in Nursing, before a Central Register becomes possible and desirable. This, again, is entirely our own view.

It seems, therefore, that we differ from our contemporary only in one simple fact. It considers that it will only be "in the course of years" that this high average of culture and practical skill will be attained. We maintain, from clearer and wider knowledge, that, for more than a decade past, the general standard in these respects among Nurses has been steadily and rapidly rising, and has *now* reached the height which deserves legal recognition and support. We point to the undoubted increase which has taken place in the social position, in the technical education, and the refinement of Nurses of the present day, as compared with their predecessors. We contend that, in each of these respects, a high average has already been reached, and we maintain that, in these matters, further improvement can only and alone

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