

"Registration affects 15,000 nurses, 27,000 medical men, and 37,000,000 of people." We have shown what feeling is growing in each of these classes, and need only add that to our minds these facts are quite conclusive and point with unerring certainty to the success in the very near future of the movement to secure registration for trained nurses.

So much for the affirmative answer to our question. But on the other side we find here and there a few individuals who are opposed to the scheme, on one ground or another. Upon analysing the objections they severally raise, we discover that they may be divided into two small classes, the first of which objects to registration upon purely personal grounds, the second because they honestly believe that any action at present in this direction would be premature, and therefore harmful. The one, therefore, is simply selfish in its opposition to a new order of things; the other is only slow in the acceptance of it. With the latter class we frankly and willingly admit we have much sympathy; and we attach so much importance to the opinions, however mistaken, of thoroughly honest and honourable critics that we propose to defer to our next number, and then consider at length, the objections to registration put forward by those who now hold back from assisting the movement on the ground that the time has not fully come for such a great and national question to be definitely settled. We believe we shall be able then to convince all honestly and alone objecting upon this ground that they are mistaken. But to-day we have a few words to say concerning the first class of opponents to the idea of a general registration, carried out by law, for trained nurses.

We are earnestly desirous to hurt no one's feelings, and shall therefore abstain from any attempt to indicate the individuals who compose this class. But, as a broad principle, we presume it may be taken for granted that it is only possible to persuade a thoroughly selfish person to take an impersonal view of any thing or any body by clearly demonstrating that it is to his own particular interest so to do, or that it is to his own particular discredit not to do so.

Now, from information received from many sources, we are led to believe that in this matter the members of this class have conjured up visions of lost or lessened authority over nurses who become registered, or of the increased remuneration and general power and respect which such nurses will obtain, and of many like results and consequences which would follow from their obtaining legal status; then, having magnified each dimension of these spectres, they call upon all around them to shudder and quail before phantoms they have evolved only and entirely from their own inner consciousness.

Nurses cannot be registered as trained, till they have received and concluded their training. During their probationary period they must therefore remain

exactly as now, under the full control of the hospital authorities. As every nurse must obtain a thorough training when registration is her goal—and more or less the *compulsory* goal of her work—it follows that probationers will be more, rather than less, under the authority of hospital managers than they are even now. For if a nurse be discharged from her hospital before her training is completed, she practically will lose the time she has already given to her work, just as a medical student rusticated—say at the end of his first year—from his school, loses all the certificates he had previously earned.

We would strongly urge upon those who raise these and other like reasons against granting legal registration, that they should look at the question from the standpoints of others beside themselves. We can assure them that if they do this, they will find that whatever tends to raise nursing, will directly aid them and forward their own work and objects, far more than they would imagine from a cursory and one-sided consideration of this question.

Finally, for their own credit's sake, we would point out these incontrovertible facts; that registration is beyond the shadow of a doubt certain to be demanded before long by the public for its own protection, as it is now being brought forward by medical men for their own and their patients' good; and that to try to prevent or even postpone any great improvement for the commonweal in these days when public opinion is formed, and its results carried out, by steam and electricity, is simply to court certain defeat, and the utter ruin of all the reputation and good name previously possessed. We say quietly, and with a full knowledge of how matters are progressing, that for their own sakes we earnestly hope the opponents of registration for nurses will hesitate and withdraw from their untenable position, before their names are irrevocably connected with that opposition. For we are convinced that anyone who attempts to stem or turn aside the rising tide of public opinion on this matter, can only be likened unto Dame Partington of immortal memory, for his efforts must inevitably be as foolish and futile as that good lady's were, when she sought to keep back the raging waves of the Atlantic with her domestic pail and broom, when a great storm sent them surging into the sanctity of her little kitchen garden.

NORTH-WEST LONDON HOSPITAL.

A BAZAAR was held at the Athenæum, Camden Road, in aid of the funds of the North-West London Hospital, Kentish Town Road, on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, April 26th, 27th, and 28th.

This hospital was founded in 1878, and is the only institution of its kind in the north-western district. Of the forty-seven beds which are main-

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)