

to trained Nurses by furnishing easily obtainable information as to the education and experience which each Registered Nurse has received."

The Association then prepared and issued to its members a form of Petition to the Privy Council, which was immediately and so extensively signed that, within a month, the Roll presented to the Council contained more than 7,000 names, including those of more than 1,100 medical men living in all parts of the United Kingdom. At the same time, the Association issued a circular to those who had opposed its application to the Board of Trade, pointing out, in parallel columns, the chief statements which had been made against the Association and its replies thereto, which, as we have already noted, the Association was afforded no opportunity of bringing before the Board of Trade.

OBJECTIONS.

1. "That a self-appointed Association, such as the British Nurses' Association, is not a fitting or competent authority to determine, in the interest either of the Nursing profession or of the general public, who should be put on the Register, or who shall be excluded from it."

2. "That no written or oral examination of Nurses in the technical details of their duties can possibly lead to any approximate estimate of their real fitness and competence as Nurses, and least of all an examination conducted apart from Hospitals, and by persons not specially qualified, for a Nurses' qualifications depend mainly on practical experience, or natural gifts and moral qualities, which a mere examination, however well-conducted, can never adequately test."

REPLIES.

1. The Association includes the Matrons of more than 150 important Hospitals in Great Britain and Ireland, of many of the largest Nurse-training Institutions in the Metropolis and the Provinces, and a considerable number of the leading members of the medical profession, in addition to nearly 3,000 Trained Nurses. Such a body may fairly claim to be both "fitting" and "competent" to determine what persons have received sufficient Hospital training to be enrolled in a list of Trained Nurses.

2. All these statements are irrelevant, inasmuch as the Royal British Nurses' Association does not hold, never has held, and does not propose to hold, "written or oral examinations of Nurses in the technical details of their duties." It only requires, in the case of each candidate for membership or registration, satisfactory testimonials of "practical experience, natural gifts, and moral qualities" from those who alone are competent to give them, namely, the Hospital authorities who have been responsible for the Nurse's training, and the medical men under whom she had subsequently worked.

3. "That the effect of the proposed Register of Nurses, by granting certificates of competency professing to be authoritative, while being necessarily imperfect and untrustworthy, would be to mislead instead of guiding both the public and medical practitioners, and to lower the standard of Nursing by placing numbers of insufficiently trained and inferior Nurses on the same level as their highly-trained and thoroughly competent sisters."

4. "That the authorities of the Nurse-training Schools are alone in a position, from their experience and special knowledge, and from their intimate acquaintance with the individual Nurses who have been trained under their care, to certify who are fit and properly-trained Nurses, and that the certificates of efficiency given by them are sufficient, and are infinitely more valuable and trustworthy than any certificates otherwise acquired could possibly be."

5. "That no Association having for its object to test and guarantee by certificate the educational and other qualifications of its members has ever yet had accorded to it such powers and privileges as the British Nurses' Association aims at acquiring, until it has been shown by actual results that its action has been beneficial to the public and to the body it purports to represent, and that it has the support of the leading members, as well as of the large majority of the rank and file, of that body. The large Nurse-training Schools of Great Britain, including the Nightingale School, to whose labours the vast improvement which has of

3. It is submitted that these assertions are inaccurate, as the Association does not "grant certificates of competency" at all. The Register cannot mislead either the public or the profession, as it merely shows the duration and the places of each Nurse's training. It does not place all or any on the same level; but leaves each Nurse to stand on the merits of her specified education.

4. The bearing of these statements upon the question at issue is not manifest; inasmuch as the indicated evidence is precisely that which is demanded by the Registration Board, and is in all cases held to be indispensable. But it must be remembered that the certificates of the Nurse-training Schools are not indefinitely trustworthy; because they cannot be recalled or cancelled in the case of Nurses who, after having completed their training and left their Hospitals, may fall into habits or commit acts which would render them unfit to fill positions of trust. The Registration Board has power to strike such Nurses off the Register on the production of sufficient evidence of their unworthiness.

5. Nearly the whole of this paragraph is inaccurate. The Association does not "test and guarantee by certificate the educational and other qualifications of its members." The only "powers and privileges" which "it aims at acquiring" are those of legal incorporation, which are open to any seven British subjects on payment of certain fees. It enjoys the support of a large number of the "leading members" of the medical and Nursing professions, and in four years has been joined by one-fifth of the whole Nursing profession in this country. The names of the members of the Registration Board will alone furnish a sufficient com-

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