

attended more Committee Meetings, and taken a more active interest in the working of the Association, than any other official. There are few, however, who can gauge the full value of the work thus performed by Princess CHRISTIAN for the public. The opposition to the reforms proposed by the Association has been so bitter and extreme, that it would have compelled many, if not most, persons, in Her Royal Highness's position, to have retired from the Presidency. But the Princess, having satisfied herself that it was a matter of national benefit and importance that reforms should be made, and that the Association was a fit and proper body to carry out these reforms, never wavered for a moment in her determination that they should be effected. Her example inspired others to patiently and perseveringly continue the struggle, and finally they all had the satisfaction, but the credit of which must always belong chiefly to Her Royal Highness, of obtaining, in 1893, a Royal Charter of Incorporation, which set the seal of success upon the work of the Association.

THE OBJECTS OF THE ASSOCIATION.

These were originally defined to be, "to unite all qualified British Nurses in membership of a recognised profession; to provide for their registration on terms satisfactory to Physicians and Surgeons, as evidence of their having received systematic training; and to associate them for their mutual help and protection, and for the advancement in every way of their professional work." In other words, the Association proposed to assist Nurses, and to protect the public.

ITS PROFESSIONAL WORK.

How necessary the latter object was, can be easily understood from the fact that when the Association was formed, in 1887, women of neither character nor knowledge were in large numbers engaged in attendance upon the sick, to the danger of the public, and to the discredit of the whole Nursing Profession. The Association has, during its brief existence, met with intense hostility from a number of persons who formerly made large profits by sending out to the public so-called Nurses for whom they received the ordinary fees, but to whom they paid very small salaries, on the ground of the insufficiency of their technical training. The Association proposed, as the simplest and most speedy remedy for this state of affairs, that a system of Registration of Nurses should be carried out; that is to say, that there should be enrolled upon a Register the names, addresses, and places and dates of Hospital training of those women who, having passed through a specified course of Hospital training, applied to the Registration Board of the Association for this privilege. In addition to giving proof of the technical education which they

had received, these women were also called upon to furnish most satisfactory credentials of personal character. The Association appointed a very influential and representative Registration Board of medical men and Hospital Matrons, and this body, having carefully considered all the testimonials of the candidate, determined whether or not she could be termed a thoroughly trained Nurse, and if so; they enrolled her name upon the Register of the Association. This Register is published each year, and now contains considerably more than two thousand names. Precisely the same procedure, of course, had been previously adopted in the case of medical men, of lawyers, of clergymen, and of officers in the Army and Navy, so that the public are able, by reference to a published book, to ascertain immediately, and upon official testimony, the standing of any members of those professions. The obvious benefits of this system have led, especially in the case of the medical profession, to its enforcement by legislation and its execution by State authority; and an Act of Parliament was passed in 1858, by which a General Council of Medical Education and Registration was created for the purpose of regulating the training of medical men throughout the United Kingdom, and of supervising their final registration. The system has worked excellently, not only in protecting the public from the grave dangers to which it was previously exposed at the hands of quacks and charlatans, but also as a means of raising the whole profession of medicine; and it is believed that a similar result would follow in the case of Nurses, if Parliament were now to legalise the system which has been so auspiciously and successfully inaugurated. The Association has not only hitherto carried on this work, entirely at its own cost; but it has, after a long, arduous, and expensive struggle with those who desired to prevent reforms, obtained a Royal Charter incorporating it, and recognising the public benefit of its work. As we have said, all this has been done at the expense of the individual members of the Association, and the expense has naturally been very considerable—amounting, in fact, to nearly £2,000. Nurses are not a rich, nor even a well-paid, class of women, and it certainly is not just that they should be called upon to bear the whole charge of a reform which is practically of national value and importance. Indeed, it might almost be said to be of imperial benefit, because one great Colony of the Empire has already passed an Act making the Registration of Nurses compulsory within its confines, and other Colonies are considering the advisability of inaugurating similar legislation. And it must be remembered that the benefit to the public involved in this work of the Association, does not depend alone upon the fact that they are thus enabled to distinguish between

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