

## The Society of Chartered Nurses.

WE have been hoping to be spared the necessity of making any allusion to a most disagreeable matter. But in consequence of false and malicious statements which have been made and published, it has become our duty to state a few facts concerning the formation of the Society of Chartered Nurses.

It may be within the memory of our readers that in April, 1894, upon our suggestion that Registered Nurses should be afforded some direct means of obtaining private Nursing work, a co-operation of members of the Royal British Nurses' Association was formed under the title of The Registered Nurses' Society, the offices being situated at 269, Regent Street.

The scheme met with opposition, as usual, from certain medical members of the Executive Committee, but ultimately some others joined the Committee of the new Society. Anxious to place the Registered Nurses' Society on a sound financial basis, and also to forward its principle—the guarantee to medical men and the public that only thoroughly qualified Nurses should be placed upon the list—we undertook to act for a time as Honorary Superintendent for the purpose of selecting members and controlling professional matters in the office. Upon the earnest recommendation of Mr. Mark Hovell, a member of the Committee, Miss Etta Jackson was appointed Secretary. From month to month, the record of the Society became one of steady progress, until in February, 1896, the largest average number of Nurses were employed, and in consequence the receipts were greater, than in any previous month.

The secession of five medical members of the Committee and three Matrons during 1895—for well-known and personal reasons—failed to injure the Society in any way, chiefly from the fact that they had not taken any noticeable part in providing the members with work; and secondly, because the majority of the Nurses performed their duty with skill and devotion, earning, both from the medical men and patients who employed them, most appreciative praise.

On January 20th, 1896, Miss Etta Jackson, the Secretary, gave a month's notice of resignation, and on February 20th, as we previously reported, she became the Secretary of a proposed new co-operation. We have proof that she immediately notified her new appointment to several of the members of the Registered Nurses' Society, and within forty-eight hours we received stereotyped letters of resignation (giving no reason) from several members.

Within six days the resignations of thirteen members and the five Probationers were received!

A deputation of loyal members then called upon us to express their indignation concerning the following facts:—

They informed us that, for some weeks past, Miss Etta Jackson had been making statements calculated to inspire them with distrust concerning the future of the Registered Nurses' Society. She had informed them specifically that, in her opinion, the members would get no work from medical men in the future. They had also now received letters from members who had resigned—Miss Margaret S. H. Mackintosh taking an active part in these tactics—recommending their former colleagues to sever their connection with the Registered Nurses' Society, and apply to Miss Etta Jackson, at 105, Harley Street (the residence of Mr. Mark Hovell), because she was receiving applications for membership of a new co-operation of members of the Royal British Nurses' Association, to be called the Chartered Nurses' Association.

Miss Etta Jackson also corresponded with some of the members (and interviewed others) to the same effect. Members of the Registered Nurses' Society were informed that if they would join the new Co-operation, "no further references would be required from them," and also that the Regulations of the new Society "would be practically the same as the Registered Nurses' Society."

Suffice it to add that the Committee of the new Society is reported to include the ladies and gentlemen who are at present controlling the Executive Committee of the Royal British Nurses' Association, and that an office has been taken within fifty yards from that of the Registered Nurses' Society. A Committee of selection was held at the house of Mr. John Langton, when the seceding members were admitted to the new Society without any official references but their recent membership of the Registered Nurses' Society. The rules, regulations, &c., of the Registered Nurses' Society appear to have been calmly appropriated *en bloc*. The only slight miscalculation made has been concerning the loyalty and honour of a large majority of the members who refused to join the new venture and who, we are glad to say, repudiate indignantly the proceedings in connection with the formation of the Society of Chartered Nurses. Miss Etta Jackson, we understand, has made an excellent bargain in her change of employment, being provided with board, lodging, an Assistant Secretary, servants, and a handsome salary. We have received a large number of kind letters from medical men and others, and believe that the Registered Nurses' Society can safely

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)