

history proved that the movement in favour of Registration of Midwives and Nurses in the hands of such energetic supporters would certainly be crowned with success, and once more history has repeated itself in the most unmistakable manner.

But there is one criticism which has been brought to our notice to which we desire to give our most earnest consideration. A correspondent writes: "I think Registration is likely to be of enormous service to the public as a safeguard, but that it is putting the cart before the horse. In the Medical profession a man has to be first instructed, then examined, and only when he is successful in obtaining his diploma to practise can he be Registered. It should, I think, be the same way exactly with Midwives and Nurses." We are aware that the same idea has been frequently enunciated before. First, a definite regular course of instruction; second, a distinct and searching examination into the knowledge gained, and if that knowledge be found satisfactory in quantity and quality, an official certificate; and third, an official Registration of that certificate.

Now, we ask those who argue thus to reflect for one moment as to what is actually proposed to be done at present, and in future, in this matter. Furthermore, we ask them to look back awhile, and remember what this very system of Registration has done both for instruction and for examination in the Medical world. It is proposed, then, that, to commence with, as a concession demanded both by custom and justice, all who are now engaged as Midwives or Nurses shall be entitled—on merely furnishing proof of that fact and of their general character, satisfactory to the Registration body—to be enrolled either on the Register of Midwives or on the Register of Nurses. Exactly this same recognition of "existing rights" has been enforced by law in every similar measure. When the Dentists, for example, were incorporated, it is well known that a blacksmith who had been in the habit of extracting teeth in his native wilds claimed to be Registered, and had his claim perforce allowed. So we may presume that no one would venture to say that a similar meed of justice should not in this case be dealt out to those now working as Midwives and Nurses, many of whom—most excellent practitioners, or attendants on the sick—probably commenced their professional career long before regular training was given, or examinations or certificates were dreamt of.

But after this "period of grace," what is proposed to be done? If we rightly understand the scheme, it is suggested that only those who can produce certificates from an Obstetrical examin-

ing body—obtained naturally after examination, undergone naturally after instruction and practice in the Obstetric Art—can be Registered as Midwives. Also, that only those who can produce certificates from a recognised Training School for Nurses—obtained, we presume, after examination, certainly after some regular training—can be Registered as Nurses. We ask our correspondent, how does this differ from the system he himself endorses? First, instruction; then examination and certification; then Registration. To our comprehension there is no discernible difference, and the Association's scheme is precisely upon "all fours" with that pursued in the Registration of Medical men.

But can it be that he and others imagine that before Registration is begun there should be one uniform system of instruction in Midwifery and in Nursing respectively throughout the British Isles? Or does he go further, and contend that there should be one uniform standard of examination in Midwifery and in Nursing respectively throughout the United Kingdom, necessarily inferring one uniform diploma for the former workers, and one uniform kind of certificate for the latter? We cannot believe he, or anyone else, will seriously advance such an idea, because upon the face of it such a system would be impossible of fulfilment, and therefore ridiculous. And if he turns to the Medical profession he will see that therein, although the instruction must of necessity be given in the self-same subjects in every part of the kingdom, the extent of that tuition varies most widely in different schools. And as for examination, he, or any one else, will not assert that there is any possible comparison between examinations now in force at certain Universities and those ordained by certain Corporations; and yet the high-class degree of the one, and the low-class licence of the other, both confer upon the recipient equal right to practise as a Medical man—equal right to admission upon the Register—equal professional privileges of every kind.

Once more, surely, our friend's argument collapses altogether. But we would go further and take him and others upon the very ground that he and they have chosen. We would confidently affirm that Registration offers the best possible basis upon which to build up future professional advances. We could easily show that this is no theory, but has been proved by actual experience in the case of the Medical profession; and, in view of the present importance of the subject, we hope to be able next week to prove not only this, but more also.

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MEN and women are not judged by their intentions, but by the results of their actions.

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