

ment has only to be circulated broadcast among Nurses to induce the best among them to join our ranks. (Applause.)

Dr. BEZLEY THORNE briefly seconded the resolution.

The CHAIRMAN: I make no doubt that the resolution will be heartily accepted, but before putting it to you I must say a few words. It is my pleasure and privilege to welcome the Members of the British Nurses' Association to the University and town of Cambridge. (Applause.) Our chief work here is mental training—to train the minds of men, and of women also—(applause)—to fill various higher positions of life; but I can assure you we are in sympathy with all good training. We do not a little in physical training, and we do not a little also, I am glad to say, in the especial training in which you are particularly concerned. And I have great pleasure in addressing you on this present occasion, because I remember the former state of things, and many of the enormous advances which have been made in the treatment of the sick during my period of life—and they have gone on at railroad speed. (Applause). There has been, perhaps, none greater than those improvements which have taken place in Nursing. I remember the time when Nursing was a sort of refuge for the destitute, was relegated to the old and the infirm. Those who had gone through the active part of life were thought proper persons to undertake the duties of Nursing. Oftentimes they were *sans* eyes, *sans* ears, *sans* hands, and almost *sans* everything. But now the very flower of womanhood is devoted to this purpose. (Applause.) The flower of womanhood, in all ranks and positions of life, have met together on this one great common ground, tending to the sick and pained. They bring their energies to it with the most hearty goodwill, with the most marvellous goodwill; they seem to flinch from nothing they undertake of the various works of Nursing, and often disagreeable and painful works. They undertake them in full, good, earnest, hearty spirit, and they do it, also, with a purity of intention and a purity of meaning which surpasses all expression. (Applause.) And I am pleased to welcome you, also, as a member of the Staff of Addenbrooke's Hospital—now the senior member of that Staff, and, therefore, I think I may say, the representative of that Staff. The changes which have taken place in the service of the Hospital in my time are marvellous, and I hope I may give this public recognition, this statement of my feeling of the enormous advantages which this town, this neighbourhood—which almost each individual person in it—is deriving from the work of the

Nurses of Addenbrooke's Hospital. (Applause.) It is sometimes a very depressing work, and one of them said to me the other day, when some case she had charge of had gone badly, "Sir, it is rather depressing;" but that same good Nurse could take to herself the consolation of the feeling that she had ministered to the alleviation of a vast amount of sickness, and the prolongation of life. I remember her well, early in the morning and late at night, by the bedside of a little boy, and I am certain that little boy's life she may take to her own account, as having been saved by her unwearied care, and as some encouragement in the depression which she sometimes feels. Your Association is, I know, a large and successful one; in fact, if it were not in the hands of women, I should say it was almost too successful—(laughter)—but I have learned to feel there is nothing which the wonderful perseverance of women will not accomplish, and I have no doubt they will carry their points in this movement, whatever they are. I always feel that what women undertake, they will do. I cannot understand what is the real objection to the proposal for Registration, which seems to my mind very desirable. An objection I do hear is, that it will make Nurses too presuming. Now, I confess my observation of Trained Nurses is, that they are singularly unassuming, and that the greater their knowledge, the less is their presumption—(applause);—the more they know, the more they seem to appreciate the very great difficulties which we all feel, or should feel, in tending the sick. Indeed, it is ignorance which is the great cause of presumption; it is the ignorant who rashly "rush in where angels fear to tread," and I cannot but feel, therefore, that this is entirely wrong—that there is no need whatever to have apprehension on this ground. (Hear, hear.) I would say just a few words with regard to the work you have to do. One word is, "Do not let your devotion be too much rivetted upon your patient to the neglect of the room in which the patient is." (Applause.) Be not afraid of fresh air—(laughter);—bear in mind there is not, and perhaps never will be discovered, any antiseptic equal to fresh air. Do not allow the room to be cumbered with unnecessary furniture, or too much loaded with flowers, and especially do not allow, if you can help it, any of those sweet-smelling flowers—lilies, above all, and hyacinths—which too often find their way, especially into ladies' rooms, and which, with their sweetness, diffuse also a certain amount of poison, which makes the patient feel a little languor, a little headache; which, to the sick person, is often injurious. The Nurses of Addenbrooke's Hospital well know that I

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)