

THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED
THE NURSING RECORD

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No. 1,546

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 1917.

Vol. LIX.

EDITORIAL.

A SERIOUS ECONOMIC DANGER AVERTED.

Our readers will appreciate the importance of the announcement, made briefly in our last issue, that the Royal British Nurses' Association has withdrawn its application for a Supplemental Charter, for this means that the *status quo* of the Association is maintained; it is still the only society of nurses incorporated by a Royal Charter in which definite rights are granted to them in writing by a Sovereign of these Realms, and the College remains merely a Company, promoted by the laity, limited by guarantee, incorporated by the Board of Trade under the Companies Acts—a form of incorporation open to any persons desiring to form a Joint Stock Company for trade purposes—and has absolutely no professional status or prestige to offer to its members in return for their registration fees.

THE MAIN POINT AT ISSUE.

The main point at issue in the application of the Royal British Nurses' Association for a Supplemental Charter for the amalgamation of the College of Nursing, Ltd., and the R.B.N.A., as the Royal British College of Nursing, was that the two bodies should obtain a Charter incorporating, in the main, the present autocratic Constitution of the College, and should seek protection for "the official Register" instead of a Register, thus acquiring power to influence Parliament to give State Recognition to this particular Register, to the exclusion of all others, in any Bill which might be brought forward for the State Registration of Trained Nurses.

The Supplemental Charter, by providing for the admission of the laity to membership of the proposed Royal British College of Nursing, did away with the professional standing which trained nurses at present enjoy under the original Charter.

The awakening of the nurse members of the R.B.N.A. to this danger to their professional independence, and the fact that the Royal British Nurses' Association has withdrawn its

Petition to the Privy Council for this dangerous Supplemental Charter, is an excellent sign of a keener professional conscience among the nurse members of the Association, fostered, no doubt, by a more liberal official attitude from within, towards the rights and aspirations of the nurses.

The withdrawal of this application has averted one of the most serious economic dangers to which the nursing profession has been subjected for years.

It is now thirty years ago, this month, since the British Nurses' Association was founded. For the whole of that period the rightful demands of trained nurses for co-operation, for independence of speech, action, and conscience has been subjected to the most ungenerous treatment by hospital managers and officials and their subsidized press, and we can but congratulate the minority—members of the Matrons' Council, the Society for the State Registration of Trained Nurses, and the Irish and Scottish Nurses' Associations, that they have, for so many years, stood firmly for these principles, unintimidated by a discreditable attempt to deprive them not only of their professional, but of their human rights. We have but to glance back to find on record such attempts—more especially by the large London Hospitals—voiced by the lay edited commercial nursing press, to realize what a valiant fight these women have made.

To mention the principal attempts to subjugate the nurses we have (1) The attempt to smash up the British Nurses' Association, and the costly opposition to the grant of the Royal Charter; (2) the attempt of city magnates, naturalized and otherwise, instigated by officials of Guy's Hospital, to dominate the profession through "the Incorporated Society for the higher Education and Training of Nurses," which—in spite of the advocacy of the late Lord Rothschild—the nurses defeated before the Board of Trade; (3) the "Bill to provide for an Official Directory of Nurses," secretly drafted by the Central Hospital Council for

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