

vent it receiving Lady Bloomfield's Fund, or to force it to be Registered as a trading concern, and so lead to the retirement of the President, H.R.H. the Princess Christian—a contingency which they absolutely declined.

Sir JAMES CRICHTON BROWNE, Lord Chancellor's Visitor in Lunacy, said he was somewhat shocked when he read that a "committee of observation" had been formed to prevent the Association from carrying out its proceedings. This was simply a new manifestation of an old animosity of which they had ceased to have any dread. Its immediate cause was an application to the Board of Trade to sanction the registration of the Association with the omission of the word "limited" in order to have facilities for carrying on the business of the Association for receiving and dealing with the gifts and benefactions for the benefit of Nurses, which would, he trusted, flow in upon them bountifully in time to come. He deprecated the hidden tactics and misrepresentations which had been made against them. The opposition was a little premature, as their application had not been advertised in the public prints. The time for opposition arose when that had been done. Their articles of association, which had not yet been approved by the Board of Trade, had by some extraordinary means been obtained, and had actually been printed by their opponents and extensively circulated throughout the country. Notwithstanding all opposition, the Royal British Nurses' Association with its three thousand members was an accomplished fact, and he had no doubt that the application would be successful in spite of all the attacks that malice and envy could direct towards them. He thought the expression "scum of the profession" was a printer's error for "cream of the profession." The Association was capable of taking care of itself. The opposition to them was opposed to the great principles of social evolution. All development implied differentiation of structure and functional and gradual organisation. In the simplest organism every cell performed every function. As division of labour goes on the duties of the separate cells are coördinated. So in social development bodies of persons are set apart for special duties, professions, trades, crafts, scattered throughout the country, working in isolation and individually. In the course of time they establish communication between each other, coalesce, organise round a centre and assume a corporate existence, not only for their own benefit, but for the benefit of the body corporate. Nurses were no exception to that rule, and, in obedience to that inexorable law, they had begun to organise. The opposition to this

principle came too late in the day; it was contrary to all great principles of biology, and ran counter to the public interests of this country, for it aimed at depriving the public of securities and safeguards which they had long needed, and to which they were well entitled. He could not understand why the public had not made a peremptory demand for the Registration of Nurses long ago. It was a recorded fact that the Training Institutions sometimes sent out to the public women who were only half trained and imperfectly educated, as well as thoroughly Trained Nurses. What were the objections which had been urged against this Association? The first was "that the duties and qualifications of a Nurse are so different from those of all other kinds of bodies of persons seeking a public Registration, and so much depends upon the character and disposition, apart from mere technical skill, that to place Nurses upon a Register would merely be to mislead the public regarding their efficiency." He affirmed confidently that while disposition and character were of the utmost importance, they were not of more importance to them than to other professions that were already Registered—*e.g.*, medical men, who were compulsorily Registered by Act of Parliament; and he had never heard it said that the Medical Register was of no use to the public, because it contained no reference to the character and disposition of the medical man. Was not the teacher's disposition and character of some account? and yet Parliament was considering whether they should not be Registered. Then surely technical knowledge and skill ought to count for something as well as moral character and disposition. A Nurse may have the sweetest disposition in the world, but if she allowed a sufferer to bleed to death it would not be much consolation for him to reflect upon her sweet disposition and unblemished character. He went further, and said that the Register did contain some indication of character, and that the objection was altogether flimsy and sophistical. The second objection was like unto it. It was that the authorities of the Nurse-training schools are alone, by their position, capable of understanding the qualifications and character of Nurses, and of giving information regarding them, and that all these authorities opposed Registration. Was that statement correct? Some of the great training schools were represented on the Council, and upon the Registration Board of this Association. He thought it was not a proper thing to go before the Board of Trade with a statement which was distinctly incorrect. He asked if Nursing was to be a free profession, or to be confined to a series of little close corporations under the thumb of the

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