

so obscure that it is doubtful if they are intended to apply to the Register of the Association. But inasmuch as the letter in question would be entirely meaningless and absurd unless its assertions refer solely and entirely to the volume published by the Association, it may be inferred that this is the case.

In that event we deeply regret to be obliged to point out that many of Dr. Sansom's statements are absolutely inaccurate, and that the remainder are simply ridiculous. Indeed, so evident are these conclusions that we regret that no member of the Association has taken the trouble to reply to the letter in our contemporary, the *Medical Press and Circular*. In the first place, says Dr. Sansom, "A common register is objected to, because it tends to promote the second and third rate Nurse at the expense of the best-trained Nurses." This is clearly not the case with the Association's Register, because each Nurse is enrolled upon the strength only of what Hospital training she has received. If promotion there be, of any kind, it is surely the best trained Nurse who secures it, at the expense of the second and third-rate Nurses, inasmuch as the merest novice can see by a glance at the Register the difference in the training which each woman who figures thereon has received. To our mind this furnishes a new and excellent proof of the value of the Register, and we thank Dr. Sansom for having called our attention to an argument which we shall certainly employ, in future, in pointing out the importance of the Register to well-trained Nurses.

But the letter proceeds to state that this much-abused volume "reduces all to one level, and it is therefore to be avoided by those who have something to lose and nothing to gain by being classed with those of inferior qualifications, or in some cases of doubtful character." Dr. Sansom "doth protest too much," and therein, unhappily for his argument, exposes its lamentable febleness. We imagine that he would be the last person in the world to assert that the Medical Register has raised the twenty-four thousand medical men who figure on its pages, besides himself, to the level occupied by Dr. A. Ernest Sansom; and we feel sure that many would fervently deny that it had placed them there. Why, we may humbly ask, has Dr. Sansom registered himself? Why has he not avoided classing himself with men "of inferior qualifications, or, in some cases, of doubtful character?" Because "at any rate this conclusion is irresistible," that if Dr. Sansom permits his name to appear on "a com-

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mon register" infinitely humbler individuals in the scale of creation may surely take a similar step without absolute degradation.

But the Register it is stated "attracts those of inferior qualifications for obvious reasons." This we have no hesitation in characterising at once as totally and absolutely untrue; because this is an assertion which it is possible easily to disprove. The Register was opened in January, 1890, and until June 30th, the preliminary prospectus which we have now before us, states that there would be a "period of grace," during which all who had for three years nursed the sick, whether trained in Hospitals or not, would be eligible for Registration.

At the end of June, we find that three years' Hospital work was made an essential qualification for Registration. For eleven months, therefore, that has been the "minimum qualification"; and seeing that the London Hospital, with which Dr. Sansom is connected, grants a certificate of thorough training at the end of two years' work, it is hardly to be believed that he would seriously term three years' Hospital experience an "inferior qualification." And as the Registration Board is bound, we presume, to abide by the rules framed by the General Council of the Association, it cannot even receive applications from candidates who are not eligible. And therefore, the only manner in which the Register can "attract" inferior Nurses, must be in the sense of the attraction which the unattainable always exerts. If this, indeed, be the "obvious reason" to which Dr. Sansom alludes, we withdraw the description "untrue," and substitute "wilfully misleading," because no clue is given that the attraction is of a nature so honourable to the Register.

Dr. Sansom uses the present tense, and that we have proved to be incorrect.

But has the Register, from its inception, ever attracted Nurses of inferior qualifications?

Remembering the period of grace mentioned in the Preface, we may now confess that we commenced to analyse the Register expecting to find upon it some hundreds of women who had not been trained in Hospitals. Our surprise, we frankly admit, was as great as our admiration for the Register now is, when we discovered that out of the seventeen hundred names in the volume there are only forty-nine who have been trained in Midwifery and monthly nursing alone, although many of these hold the very distinguished diploma of the Obstetrical Society of

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