

"suction" over any other mode of feeding is that it excites a flow of saliva—that is the first process of digestion, and is in strict consonance with the natural method. Infants must be fed with *fluid* nourishment—not gruel or sop, as is but too often done by the ignorant and thoughtless. (*To be continued.*)

### ROYAL BRITISH NURSES' ASSOCIATION.

THE following extracts from contemporaries will show our readers that at last the opponents of the Association have drawn a reply from members who are very well qualified to speak on its behalf. Most of our readers will agree with the general opinion which is being expressed—that the enemies of the Association have met considerably more than their match.

In the *Times* of May 22 there appeared the following letter, which of course we give, as we do not approve of the methods pursued by the *Hospital*, which supplies its readers only with letters which support its views, and carefully withholds from them all others. Only we follow the example of the *British Medical Journal*, and reduce the list of names, which actually occupies half a column of the *Times*, to dimensions which our space can afford, by merely omitting mention of all the public appointments which the petitioners hold, and which, although doubtless essential for the identification of many of them, is unnecessary here.

#### TRAINED NURSES.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE TIMES."

SIR,—May I ask you to be good enough to publish in your next impression the accompanying petition, which has been presented to the President of the Board of Trade? I would desire to draw your attention to the fact that the signatories to this petition are for the most part medical men who are or have been directly engaged in teaching and training Nurses, and have therefore far greater right to speak with authority upon the matter at issue than those whose names appeared to the letter you published on April 30, in support of the action of the Royal British Nurses' Association, who, though some of them are distinguished men in their profession, cannot be said to have identified themselves with Nurse-training. Also that the Register lately published by the Association itself confirms in the most convincing manner the objections which have been urged against it, and illustrates very forcibly the evils which must result from the legal recognition of such a Register.—I am, Sir, yours obediently,

J. G. WAINWRIGHT,

Treasurer of St. Thomas's Hospital.

St. Thomas's Hospital, May 21.

To the Right Hon. the President of the Board of Trade.

The humble petition of the undersigned Physicians and

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Surgeons, who are directly concerned in, or have given large attention to, the education of Nurses in the Nurse-training Schools of Great Britain,

Showeth as follows:—

It has recently come to our knowledge that a self-constituted body of ladies and gentlemen, styling itself the British Nurses' Association, has applied to the Board of Trade for a licence under the 23rd Section of the Companies Act of 1867, and that under Clause 3 of its memorandum of association it proposes—

"To form, control, and carry on

"(1) A Register of Trained Nurses.

"(2) A Register of Certificated Midwives, and to determine from time to time what tests shall be specified by candidates for Registration, as evidence that they possess skill and knowledge in their profession;" or, in other words, that the British Nurses' Association aims at exercising, under cover of a licence from the Board of Trade, the power of granting certificates of competency in nursing, and so of controlling the education of Nurses, a power such as has hitherto only been conferred on really representative bodies by Royal Charter or by special Act of Parliament, and is not within the scope of the Companies Acts.

Against this scheme of Registration we desire to protest on the following grounds:—

(1) That a self-appointed Association, such as the British Nurses' Association, is not a fitting or competent authority to determine, in the interest either of the Nursing profession or of the general public, who should be put on the Register, or who should be excluded from it.

(2) That no written or oral examination of Nurses in the technical details of their duties can possibly lead to any approximate estimate of their real fitness and competence as Nurses, and least of all an examination conducted apart from Hospitals, and by persons not specially qualified, for a Nurse's qualifications depend mainly on practical experience, or natural gifts and moral qualities, which a mere examination, however well conducted, can never adequately test.

(3) That the effect of the proposed Register of Nurses, by granting certificates of competency professing to be authoritative, while being necessarily imperfect and untrustworthy, would be to mislead instead of guiding both the public and medical practitioners, and to lower the standard of Nursing by placing numbers of insufficiently trained and inferior Nurses, on the same level as their highly-trained and thoroughly competent sisters.

(4) That the authorities of the Nurse-training Schools are alone in a position, from their experience and special knowledge, and from their intimate acquaintance with the individual Nurses who have been trained under their care, to certify who are fit and properly-trained Nurses, and that the certificates of efficiency given by them are sufficient, and are infinitely more valuable and trustworthy than any certificates otherwise acquired could possibly be.

(5) That no Association having for its object to test and guarantee by certificate the educational and other qualifications of its members has ever yet had accorded to it such powers and privileges as the British Nurses' Association aims at acquiring, until it has been shown by actual results that its action has been beneficial to the public and to the body it purports to represent, and that it has the support of the leading members, as well as of the large majority of the rank and file, of that body. The large Nurse-training Schools of Great Britain, including the Nightingale School, to whose labours the vast improvement which has of late years taken place in the education and status of Nurses is wholly attributable, are, almost without exception, unrepresented in the British

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[next page](#)