

The Prefix Royal.

We now arrive at the beginning of 1891, when the first Register was published. This event was followed almost immediately by the gracious recognition of the work of the Association by Her Majesty Queen Victoria in the grant of the prefix "Royal."

Incorporation a Necessity.

The Association had now to face the fact that it had no legal status, and it was considered desirable to apply to the Board of Trade for incorporation, and by licence to omit the word "Limited." We confess we were opposed to this course, as a Royal Charter, and later an Act of Parliament, were our objectives, and the active opposition of St. Thomas's Hospital and its supporting hospitals to even this poor little recognition of the Association's work, and the ultimate refusal of the Board of Trade to its application to omit the word "Limited," ten days before the opposition case was supposed to have been completed, on the ground that considerable opposition to the Association had been expressed "by influential persons!" was no personal disappointment. Neither was the conduct of the then President of the Board of Trade, "Black Michael," in condemning the Association unheard, on one-sided unsubstantiated statements "by influential persons," any surprise to those who knew him. *Pithecanthropus erectus Superbus!*

The Petition for a Royal Charter.

A conference was at once held at the house of Sir William Savory, who was in the Chair, when we strongly urged the bold policy of at once applying to Her Majesty the Queen in Council, praying for the grant of a Royal Charter. This was opposed by the more timorous. They argued that as the powerful Managers of Training Schools had been able, through private influence, to prevent incorporation by the Board of Trade, they would redouble their efforts to oppose us before the Privy Council.

We argued that before the Privy Council our opponents must fight in the open, and as our cause was for the public benefit we should win. When at the end of the debate Sir William said quietly, "I support Mrs. Fenwick," all was well.

This policy was endorsed at a Mansion House Meeting at which the Lord Mayor presided, when it was unanimously resolved:

"That this Meeting is of opinion that the Royal British Nurses' Association, which already includes one-fifth of the whole number

of trained Nurses estimated to be at work in this country, and which is managed by leading members of the medical and nursing professions, is eminently worthy of public support, and of incorporation by Royal Charter, and this Meeting considers that the Association is well qualified to carry on the system of Registration of Trained Nurses which it has commenced as a voluntary measure, and that, when fully carried out, this system will protect the sick against untrained and untrustworthy workers, be of great assistance to medical men, and be most beneficial to trained Nurses by furnishing easily obtained information as to the education and experience which each Registered Nurse has received."

The Association then prepared and issued to its members a form of Petition to the Privy Council, which was immediately and extensively signed, including the names of more than 1,100 medical men living in all parts of the United Kingdom.

Many a time when working on this Petition we saw the misty dawn of day.

The hostility from the Training Schools, led by St. Thomas's Hospital, to the Petition of the Association was now intensified, and the quack nursing press raged furiously. Finally, at the inquiry before the Privy Council, when opponents were compelled to distinctly state their objections, it was observed that these were nebulous and prejudiced in the highest degree, and that the reply of the Association was complete and crushing.

The Royal Charter was won in the face of the most powerful opposition, and the Association thus received the highest testimony to the public importance of its work.

ETHEL G. FENWICK.

(To be continued.)

REGISTERED NURSES PARLIAMENTARY COUNCIL.

The Registered Nurses' Parliamentary Council, 431, Oxford Street, London, W.1, has sent a notification to Members of the House of Commons informing them that Major R. W. Barnett's motion for the presentation of an humble Address to His Majesty, praying that certain modifications may be made to the scheme now laid before Parliament for the election of Sixteen Registered Nurses, to be Members of the General Nursing Council for England and Wales, has been deferred from Thursday, March 8th, to Wednesday, March 14th, out of courtesy to the new Minister of Health.

We hope to give our readers full information upon the subject in our next issue, as we go to press this week before the question comes before the House.

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