

firmly and so well that we believe it has never been found necessary to alter or amend this primary organisation.

The objects of the Association were clearly defined to be—(1) To unite all qualified British Nurses in membership of a recognised profession. (2) To provide for their Registration on terms satisfactory to Physicians and Surgeons, as evidence of their having received systematic training. (3) To associate them for their mutual help and protection, and for the advancement in every way of their professional work.

The Association immediately encountered the most strenuous opposition from a small section of the Hospital world, which has persisted, with growing intensity, ever since, and the meaning of which is perfectly intelligible. Hospitals like the "London," which derive large profits by palming off semi-trained pupils upon the public as "thoroughly trained Nurses," naturally objected to the publication of a Register of Trained Nurses, from whose pages the names of their Probationers would be conspicuous by their absence. Nursing Institutions, which make considerable incomes, in like manner, by sending out underpaid, because inferior, workers to the sick, equally objected to the public having any protection against their proceedings. Because it was, and is still, a startling fact that "any woman, however destitute she may be of knowledge, or of character, or of both, can, without let or hindrance, term herself a Trained Nurse, can obtain work in that capacity and bring much danger to the sick and discredit on the calling. Nor is there any means of preventing a Certificated Nurse, who, by drunkenness, theft, or even graver offences, has proved herself unworthy of trust, from continuing her occupation under cover of the Certificate, which she is still able to produce."

In view of the life and death importance of good Nursing in many cases, it might have been imagined that the public would, for its own sake, have eagerly and strongly supported the efforts of the Association to obtain some reform of such serious evils. It is a strange commentary upon CARLYLE'S opinion of the English people that a small, but noisy, section of interested persons have actually been able to obscure the real facts of the case, and have attempted to intimidate the Members and thwart the purposes of the Nurses' Association. It has, however, been all in vain, and opposition has only strengthened the determination of the Association to succeed in its work. In the four years of its life, despite the virulent abuse

which has been poured upon them by *The Hospital*, the Association has been joined by more than three thousand Nurses—one-fifth of the number estimated to be at work in the United Kingdom—by the Matrons of more than half of the most important Hospitals in this country, and by a considerable number of the leaders of the medical profession. It has carried into effect many valuable schemes for Nurses, of which our readers are aware, and on which, therefore, we need not enlarge. It has proved the business abilities of its managers, by accumulating a considerable reserve fund. It has compiled and published a Register of Trained Nurses, and this is its unpardonable sin, for reasons to which we have already alluded. This much-abused book is simply "an alphabetical list of Nurses' names and addresses, with the places and length of Hospital training which each Nurse has received" set against her name. The system is a purely voluntary one. There is not the slightest compulsion upon any Nurse to apply for Registration. The work of considering applications, and the accompanying Hospital Certificates and other testimonials, is done gratuitously by a most influential Registration Board of well-known Hospital Physicians, Surgeons, and Matrons. No one can be placed on the Register unless she has worked in Hospitals for three years, and is of unimpeachable character. Finally, the Board has the power of striking off the Register the name of any Nurse who is proved to be unworthy of trust.

The system being purely voluntary, as we have said, the Association, hitherto, has very wisely worked and organised, unhampered by any legal restrictions. But, last year, it learnt that large funds might be transferred to it if it were legally incorporated, and, consequently, it was proposed to take this step in the ordinary manner, by converting the Association into a limited liability company. But, in this case, there would have been no security for the property confided to the Association, because it would have been legally possible for the Members to have wound it up, and thus to have divided all its assets amongst themselves. It, therefore, became necessary to apply for the licence of the Board of Trade to omit the word "Limited"—which otherwise would have been added to the name of the Association—and by the same clause of the Act which authorises this licence, all monies confided to the Association would have been made secure from future interference. As our readers will remember,

Loefflund's Hordeum Compounds.—C. Pepsin (In dyspepsia), c. Iron in chlorosis, anaemia, jaundice, pleasant and digestible for ladies and children), c. Quinine (an excellent tonic in neuralgia, nervous headache, and debility), C. Lime (—hypophosphite, in rickets, scrofulosis, very digestible. 3s. 6d. R. Baelz and Co., 14-20, St. Mary Axe, E.C.

Loefflund's Alpine Milk Rusks (ground) ensure the most perfect development of bone and muscle in growing children from 6 months to 2 years of age. Prevents rickets, scurvy, and ensures healthy progress at the most critical period. Invaluable in teething. 1s. 6d. R. Baelz and Co., 14-20, St. Mary Axe, E.C.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)