

deeply the position in which certain Hospitals—which depend upon public confidence and public support for their great and beneficent work—have been placed by a few of their officials. On the one side, we see the Royal British Nurses' Association, founded for the ostensible purpose of effecting greatly-needed Nursing reforms, silently, and within the profession itself, hindered and hampered from the first, its objects misrepresented, its work opposed, and its Members, week by week, assailed in the organ of the opposition with scurrilous abuse. Despite all this, we watch the Association going upon its way steadily; asking its opponents to hear its side, and receiving only rude refusals; occupying two years in examining the question, collecting facts and opinions, and advice; then appealing to the Nurses' Training Schools, to initiate a remedy for acknowledged evils, and once more being met with a rebuff; finally, at great expense and labour, taking the work of Registration into its own hands, and, in the face of the greatest difficulties, publishing the first Register. Then the Association sought incorporation in the ordinary way, and not being a trading company, applied for the omission of the word "Limited" after its name. Its opponents, by means of statements which are manifestly untrue, prevented it obtaining this petty privilege.

Such it appears to us, as independent observers, is the progress of the Association. On the other hand, we see some ten or twelve Institutions opposing the Association. They do it ostensibly and solely on the ground of its Registration work, for they have practically admitted that with its other schemes they can find no fault. They object totally and utterly to Registration, that is to say, to the publication of a book, once a year, containing the names and addresses of Nurses and the places and periods of Hospital training through which each one of them has passed.

"Strange! very strange!" we hear the public say. "These Hospitals themselves train Nurses; they, with one exception, even give them certificates. Why should they object to the statement that certain women have been trained, or have been certificated, by themselves, being published in a book against those women's names, so that we can easily learn the fact? The police court reports tell us of women 'dressed in Nursing uniform' convicted for drunkenness, theft, and even of graver crimes, and it generally appears that these women hold forged or stolen Hospital certificates, and are not trained Nurses at all. We

can understand," continues the puzzled Public—"we can quite understand honourable medical men like those who are working so hard for this Nurses' Association trying to save their patients from being victimised by such women. Yes! and we can quite understand good Nurses being galled to the quick by being classed in public estimation with such disgraceful characters. But what we can *not* understand is why this simple attempt to protect us and the Nursing profession and medical men from such women is being so greatly opposed by Hospitals, which we maintain by our subscriptions, and which we really think should have some consideration for us, in return."

We are much within the mark in saying that during the last four years such comments as these have been made to us at least a hundred times by influential subscribers to Hospitals; and we have no hesitation in expressing our firm conviction that the opposition made by certain Institutions to a movement of which the public very clearly recognises the benefit to itself, has wrought them, and, indeed, many innocent Institutions in addition, an incalculable amount of harm. Serious attention has recently been called to the rapid diminution of public support to our Hospitals, and we are confident that the true explanation is—not that the country is poorer—because the Banking returns show that more money is, lying idle now than has been the case for many years; not that the nation is growing less charitable or that its benevolence has been diverted into other channels—because its generosity is boundless; but because its confidence in Hospital management has been seriously shaken. And, just at this juncture of distrust, several of our largest Institutions are coming before the public struggling to prevent an Association of women obtaining the simple legal rights of incorporation—because, forsooth, the Association has committed the unpardonable offence of publishing a book (!) in the endeavour to protect the public from the ignorant and untrustworthy persons who now bring danger to the sick and disgrace upon the Nursing profession. And the discredit to these Hospitals will be the greater because they will actually—if, as we presume, they oppose the Association before the Privy Council—be obliged to confess publicly that they have made statements to a Government Department which they cannot prove.

We are informed that a strong attempt will be made to prevent this public investigation into assertions which apparently were considered

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