

several occasions since, have expressed our views with considerable emphasis. We have, however, recently learnt the exact statements which were made to the Board by the opponents of the Association, and take this opportunity to say that we find therein a great measure of excuse for the Board. While we cannot altogether absolve the Board from blame for delivering judgment upon one-sided assertions unsupported by proof, we must in justice recognise that the Board, as honourable men, evidently believing the facts to be true which were stated to them—and by persons holding responsible positions in the medical and nursing world—had some apparent justification for refusing to give any assistance to the Association. And we feel confident that Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH and the permanent officials of the Board will be annoyed, beyond measure, to find how they have been deluded and deceived, that the very weighty statements upon which they formed their judgment against the Association are untrue, and merely represent the opinion which the opponents of the Association hold of the gullibility of the Board.

The Association, then, is appealing to the Privy Council for a Royal Charter with this immense advantage, that if it is not opposed it gains the Charter at once, and if it is attacked its opponents will immediately be placed upon their own defence. Privately, they told untruths to the Board of Trade; publicly, they will be called to account for the deception which has thus been practised upon a department of the Government. Indeed, they are in such a grave position that the general impression is that they will very wisely evade the chance of a public exposure by declining to oppose the Association. We, however, have watched the proceedings of the opposition very closely for four years, and venture to differ from this opinion, and to express our belief that the authorities of some seven or eight Hospitals will be short-sighted enough to oppose the grant of the Royal Charter. Very few medical men, we imagine, will be found ready to support them on this occasion; but it is thought that they may succeed in dragging one honoured name into the discredit which will inevitably fall upon them.

The general opinion may be right, and our conjecture wrong, but for the sake of argument let us suppose that opposition is made. The opponents, as we have said, immediately lose the advantages of being the attacking party, and when they and their objections have been discredited

by their inability to prove the statements they made last year to the Board of Trade, they will, we presume, have to rebut, if they can, the startling facts which the Association will, doubtless, then advance as to the real reasons why they oppose the publication of an alphabetical list of Trained Nurses—reasons which are open secrets in professional circles. On top of this further public exposure we presume that the ridiculous hollow-ness of the opposition case will be mercilessly exposed, the vacuous verbosity of their arguments, and the palpable absurdity of the authorities of a few Hospitals investing themselves with autocratic authority over their fellow countrywomen.

Let us look at the spectacle quietly—half-a-dozen gentlemen practising the part of King CANUTE. Tradition tells how he ordered the waves not to advance, and what happened. His modern imitators have the equally sublime assurance, at the end of the 19th century, to attempt to prevent Englishwomen, who wish to do so, from enrolling their names upon a Register. Of course, they have been, and will be, exactly as successful as King CANUTE, and when the public comes to know the truth they will simply be ridiculed from John O'Groats to Land's End.

But putting all these little weaknesses of the opposition aside, how does the case of the Association stand? We have very carefully perused the Draft Charter, which we were enabled to publish in our columns, last week. We defer a detailed criticism of that document until another occasion, but would now point out two perfectly patent facts.

The Charter is sought for, not only by Her Royal Highness, the President of the Association, but also by men whose names are household words in the medical profession throughout the civilised world, and by the Matrons of some of the most important Nurse-Training Schools in the United Kingdom. We understand that only a limited number of names can be inserted in the body of the Charter, which explains why many equally well-known supporters and members of the Association are not included in the published list. These eminent names, therefore, merely represent an immense amount of professional support which is behind the Charter; because we hear, from all sides, of the great assistance which is being evoked in aid of the Association.

The other fact which the wording of the Charter makes clear beyond dispute, is that absolutely nothing beyond incorporation is

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