

stances, ought to be put upon a register of trained nurses, they not having the proper qualification of that designation. I come now to what I call, if I may dignify it by that title, the change of argument by which this case was supported by my learned friend, Sir Horace Davey. Over, and over again, my learned friend said in effect, "We don't aspire to be an actual register; we don't aspire to be anything more than a directory of Nurses. Well, I know of no such thing as a chartered directory of anybody. I know of a medical register, and a register of qualified veterinary surgeons, and of a register of pharmaceutical chemists, but having done my best to obtain information in the ordinary way so far as parties can before your lordships, by going to the officials, I am informed that the application has no precedent.

Lord HANNEN.—The name occurs to me—the Chartered Accountants.

Sir R. WEBSTER.—The Chartered Accountants have no power to keep a register of any kind; all that they have the power to do is to allow members to join their Association. I have not the smallest objection to this Association enrolling members, and if your lordships think it right, under the authority of a Royal Charter. But what these gentlemen, who instruct me, feel so strongly upon, and which feeling, I may be permitted as an advocate, to endorse, is, that the evils consequent upon a Chartered Register—in itself so entirely novel—in the profession of Nurses, are one-hundred-fold more than in the case of anyone else, because of matters, to which I referred last Monday, as to the essential qualifications of Nurses, it would not be possible to impart accurate information by a register.

Lord HANNEN.—Would it be illegal for the Chartered Accountants to have a register.

Sir R. WEBSTER.—Not at all.

Lord HANNEN.—I am not disregarding your argument that it would be misleading.

Sir R. WEBSTER.—That is not the point, my lord, if you will bear with me. Kindly look at page 4 of the proposed Charter as to the purposes and powers of the Corporation—"The purposes of the Corporation are the following—the maintenance of a list or register of Nurses showing as to each Nurse registered, her name and address, and the name of the hospital or other places at which she has been trained." I know of no case in which the purpose of the chartered Corporation has been to keep a chartered list. I was about to say that if they only wish to make a list of their Nurses they can do it by their bye-laws. There is nothing to prevent them from publishing a list of their members. But they are desirous of obtaining by this Charter power to make the register an authentic and recognised document in which the names of trained Nurses are to appear, and they do not hesitate to say that their ultimate object is to prevent people who are not on the register from being considered properly qualified trained Nurses. It was not until Sir Horace Davey opened the case that there was a suggestion that all they wanted was to make a directory for Nurses. That of course is a strong observation, and it must not be accepted unless I can make it good. I will call your attention first to the evidence. If you will kindly look at the first Report on page 552, I will show your lordships that the objects I have indicated were sought to be carried out by this Association down to the date of the presentation of the petition, and are practically endorsed by the petition. At page 553 you will find the evidence of Mrs. Bedford Fenwick—a lady who has done more to promote the

objects of this Association than anybody—a lady of immense ability, energy, and power of organisation. At question 9,604 she is asked by the Chairman—"As to the British Nurses' Association are you connected with that?—Yes.

Will you tell us what it is?—It is, firstly, to unite trained nurses together in a purely professional union. Secondly, to provide for the legal registration of nurses under the control of medical men. Thirdly, to help nurses in times of need or adversity; and fourthly, to improve the knowledge and usefulness of nurses throughout the empire.

Do you consider it is necessary to have such an association as that?—I think so under the present circumstances. Nursing has so improved, I may say so advanced, in the last ten years, that I think now we have come into a condition in which, as a profession, it should be organised; and I believe that the only way of organisation of the profession is by giving the members of that profession a voice in their own progress and education, and also by having a controlling body outside the general committees of our individual hospitals, who would be in a position, I may say, to regulate the education and also the condition of the nurses. It is really a matter practically very much the same as the medical profession. Although all our medical schools in London have their own basis of medical teaching, still there is a general medical council which controls the whole profession, and regulates, I may say, the education of medical men; and I believe that it would be a very good thing if Nurses could be, to a great extent, controlled in the same manner; because although hospitals have entire control over Nurses as long as they are in their service, when they leave the hospital they are entirely irresponsible persons; they can do what they like.

That is to say they have got their certificate?—They have got their certificate; and hospitals cannot recall their certificates. Nurses may be accused of grave faults; they may be accused of crimes and be imprisoned, but when they come out of prison they are quite at liberty, if they choose, to attempt to get, and do get, work again upon the score of their certificate.

Then you think it necessary, in order to protect the public, that there should be such an association?—I think first, for the protection of the public, that there should be a control over all trained Nurses. Untrained or semi-trained Nurses are under the control of their individual committees.

Have you one grade of certificate or various grades?—With regard to our Association, we do not give a certificate, but we give those Nurses who are registered, I suppose you would call it, a certificate of registration. The certificates given by their various nursing schools are registered.

But then, under the plan, what greater protection is there for the public than comes from the Hospital?—No Hospital is responsible for a Nurse once she has left the hospital service; but a general Nursing Council or Registration Board would be responsible to the general body of Nurses and to the public, to prevent any woman who proved herself unworthy of trust, going on with the work. They would take her name off the register."

Now, my lords, that is not a Directory of Nurses. That is a Certificated Register of Nurses which these ladies meant it to be. They meant it to be a Register of Trained Nurses under the imprimatur of a Royal Charter. I go to the next question, 9,611:—

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