

Sir H. DAVEY.—No, my lord, never.

The Marquis of Ripon.—Quite so, that is what I thought.

Sir H. DAVEY.—Cases have been known, I understand, where a very unfair use has been made of them.

Sir R. WEBSTER.—In some cases they have to be brought back and revised.

Sir H. DAVEY.—But how can you revise a certificate? A certificate states a fact.

Lord HOBHOUSE.—Prudent people do not accept an old certificate.

Sir H. DAVEY.—That is so. Now, my lords, my friend says that we ought to pay attention to the opinion of those who have been concerned in the training of persons who are to act as nurses. I should be extremely sorry if it were supposed that I either said or hinted anything disrespectful, or did not adequately appreciate the labours of those who have instructed my learned friend. But he avowedly represents the interests of, and is supported by the persons connected with, certain training hospitals and schools. At the same time, the ladies and gentlemen who support the petition and application I make, are medical men, surgeons or physicians in the great London hospitals, who have direct professional connection with Nurses, and they are Nurses who have appreciated the advantage of such a register. My lords, without in the least degree denying that our opponents are perfectly entitled to express their opinion, I feel quite certain that I express the opinion of those whom I represent. After all, you have on one side in substance the medical men and the nurses; and on the other you have the training schools. It is perfectly possible and quite in accordance with what one would anticipate from one's knowledge of human nature, that the training colleges—good work as they have done, and will do I hope and believe in the future—may still be so wedded to their own associations as to think that nobody can—I will not say ought—advantageously be allowed to register nurses, and that it would be much better that nobody should look anywhere for them except to the training schools and colleges. It is only human nature that they should think so. They forget that a large proportion of those institutions draw much of their life and income from sending out persons who, it is alleged and admitted, are not perfectly trained nurses—sending them out to the public as thoroughly trained nurses, and receiving payment for doing so. Therefore it is perfectly natural and only in accordance with human nature that they should resent any third body—any “foreign body” they call it—which presumed, which dared to keep a register. That feeling no doubt is somewhat intensified in the case of some of the hospitals by the fact that a large portion of their income depends upon their supplying nurses, and it is possible that if these nurses are not put upon the register, it might to some extent, perhaps to a large extent, interfere with their income. My lords, persons are directly influenced by motives of that kind—these may or they may not. It may be that many of those gentlemen whom I see sitting near my learned friend would at once disclaim motives of that kind even on behalf of the hospitals. But, my lords, we cannot tell, not even your lordships can always tell, the motives which bring about a particular course of action; and I think it is not unfair to suggest that—not in their own personal interests of course, but in the pecuniary interests of the institutions in which they have an interest and whose success they properly and seriously and disinterestedly desire—that these interests may have had some weight in determining their course of action. On the other hand, the medical men who support me think that

kind, is essential for the protection of the public and of the medical profession. These men surely have also a the establishment of some voluntary registration of this right to be listened to, and surely they can form a better opinion upon the effect on the medical profession, and on the public at large, than even those whose experience is derived entirely from the training schools and the hospitals. They live in the world, and not in the world of the hospital or the training school simply. They know what the wants of the world, and what the wants of the medical men in the world, are, and they tell us their opinion. It is at least entitled to as much weight as that of the eminent and disinterested persons whose views my learned friend has placed before you. Nor will I say much about the Nurses themselves. I have told your lordships the number of them I represent. I told you I had made a mistake, and I grieve that I should have made it. I stated the figure as the number of Nurses actually on the register. I should have said the number of Nurses who are members of the Association. It was entirely my fault, and I am obliged to my learned friend for correcting me. But I take it that the number of Nurses I gave does represent the number who have become members of the Association, although they are not on the Register. Now, I ask, is it not better for the medical men and nurses to speak for themselves? and if so, some nurses, of course, are perfectly entitled to say, “Oh, but the best of the nurses will not go on the register.” That is an argument which has been heard before. I always hear it from a person who is in a minority. He always says, “My minority contains the best of the voters.”

Sir R. WEBSTER.—(Oh, no.

Sir H. DAVEY.—Yes. My learned friend says his minority is of better quality than my majority. I am not disposed to admit that; and I do impress upon your lordships that, according to the figures given here, the number of nurses who support the incorporation is 3700, whereas those who had petitioned against it are 540 only. These figures, I think, I gave in opening the case.

Sir R. WEBSTER.—That includes the whole of the names of the nurses of the Association who have not supported it personally, but who are signed for by the President; and we have many of those who have actually signed against.

Sir H. DAVEY.—I have no doubt there are some nurses who have availed themselves of the register, and are still nurses in an opposing hospital, and who have been induced to sign the petition against us. That is quite possible and quite natural. But I assert that the majority of the trained nurses of this country, who are estimated, not by us, but by other people, as being about 5,000 in number; the majority of them do desire that these powers should be conferred upon this body. My lords, I say upon this point, allowing all due weight to the training colleges, their numbers are not embarrassing. Besides, a number are actually in our favour; and it is remarkable that those institutions which give the longest training are those which are most favourable to our proposal—such as St. Bartholomew's, Middlesex, University, St. George's, The Metropolitan, and also, to a certain extent, the Royal Free Hospital, Guy's and St. Mary's. So that even the Training Schools and Colleges are not unanimous on the subject, and it is a remarkable coincidence that the dividing line seems to be where the most training is considered necessary. The view which I submit to your lordships, is that the prayer of this petition is a moderate prayer, and one which is conceived for the interest of a class of people who are entitled to special consideration. And if your lordships conceive that the views which have been expressed, and

The “NURSING RECORD” has a Larger Sale than any other Journal devoted solely to Nursing Work.

The “NURSING RECORD” has a Larger Sale than any other Journal devoted solely to Nursing Work.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)