

particular case, whose proficiency and qualification they are in a position to guarantee.

17. Although the reform of Nursing has been greatly encouraged and assisted by the medical profession, it was not initiated, and has not been carried on, nor have the training schools been established or conducted exclusively, or even chiefly, by members of that profession.

18. The hospitals in connection with which such an organised system of training as above described has been established are comparatively few in number. Indeed, it is only in large general hospitals where there is great variety in the kinds of disease treated, and in the classes of patients admitted, that the materials exist for supplying Nurses with a thorough and complete training. Even in the best hospitals the system of training is still imperfect, and further improvement and development are required.

19. Besides such large general hospitals as are referred to in the last paragraph, there are throughout the country a very large number of smaller hospitals, and of large and small special hospitals. Such hospitals (with the exception of some large special hospitals) are not in a position, either as regards the variety or nature of the experience which a Nurse educated at them can obtain, or as regards the system of training adopted, to supply a Nurse with a course of training comparable in value with the training supplied by such highly organised institutions as have been already referred to, and many of them are wholly incapable of furnishing any adequate training. Nevertheless, a great number of such hospitals receive probationer Nurses and grant certificates. Moreover, the certificates granted by the best special hospitals, however valuable they may be, signify, as a rule, a special kind of efficiency corresponding to the special character of the hospital.

20. Thus, the certificates at present granted to Nurses by different hospitals differ most widely in value, nor does any general uniformity of system in the training of Nurses prevail, nor is there any general concurrence of opinion either as to what constitutes an adequate training or what should be the minimum qualification for a hospital undertaking to train. Much longer experience than has at present been available, and a very considerable development in the means of training, are necessary before any such general uniformity of system or opinion can be looked for.

21. The movement in favour of establishing a register of trained Nurses commenced with the appointment, by the Hospitals Association in the year 1886, of a committee consisting mainly of matrons and sisters of hospitals to inquire into and report on the question of registering Nurses. The Hospital's Association is an unincorporated body independent of the Nurse training schools, and comprising medical men, hospital secretaries, matrons, and others, which was established to facilitate the discussion of and to promote improvements in matters connected with hospital management. The said committee was unable, owing to the retirement of most of its members, to pursue the said inquiry, and in November 1887 a further committee was appointed, which reported adversely to the establishment of any general system of registering Nurses.

22. The Association (then the British Nurses' Association) was founded on the 7th of December 1887, its foundation being largely due to the efforts of a few members of the Hospitals Association who seceded therefrom upon the failure of the Committee above mentioned, to pursue the said inquiry.

23. The objects of the Association were to unite all

qualified British Nurses in membership of a recognised profession; to provide for their registration on terms satisfactory to physicians and surgeons as evidence of their having received systematic training; to associate them for their mutual help and protection, and for the advancement in every way of their professional work; and with a view to the attainment of those objects to obtain a Royal Charter incorporating the Association, and giving sanction to registers of Nurses' and midwives. Membership of the Association was confined to Nurses, midwives and medical men.

24. In the year 1889 the Association published its intention of forthwith applying to Her Majesty in Council for the grant of a Charter for the incorporation of the Association, and a draft of the proposed Charter was prepared. Such contemplated application was, however, subsequently abandoned.

25. The draft Charter so prepared (hereinafter called "the draft Charter of 1889") expressly provided for the appointment of a Registration Board for Nurses and midwives, such board to consist of qualified medical practitioners, professional nurses, and midwives. It further provided that such Board should form, control, and carry on a yearly register of male and female nurses, to be called "The Nurses' Register," and a register of midwives to be called "The Midwives' Register," with power to determine what tests should be satisfied by candidates for registration, and to remove from the register the name of any nurse who should appear unworthy to remain thereon. It was also provided that any nurse and midwife so registered should be at liberty to use the title "Registered Nurse" and "Registered Midwife" respectively.

26. In view of such intended application, the authorities of some of the leading hospitals and nurse training schools framed and published in the *Times* and elsewhere a memorial stating their objections to the register proposed to be established by the Association. All, or almost all, the signatories of such memorial have also signed one of the said petitions in opposition to the grant of the Charter now sought to be obtained.

27. In the month of November, 1889, the Association submitted a memorandum to the General Medical Council, proposing (paragraphs 1 to 4) the formation of a joint register of Nurses and midwives, to be under the control of the medical and nursing professions, and requesting (paragraph 5) the advice, support and assistance of the Council therein.

28. The said memorandum came under the consideration of the General Medical Council in conjunction with certain correspondence which had passed between the President of the said Council and Mr. Fell Pease, M.P., in reference to a Bill for the compulsory registration of midwives introduced by him into the House of Commons. The Council, in considering the last-mentioned matter, declined to accept an amendment relating to the said proposals of the Association with regard to the registration of nurses, and refused to accede to their request for advice, support, and assistance.

29. In the year 1891, the Association applied to the Board of Trade for a license under section 23 of the Companies Act, 1867, for the registration of the Association as a limited company without the addition of the word "limited" to its name.

30. Such application was opposed by the same persons who had signed the memorial mentioned in paragraph 26 hereof, and petitions on behalf of such persons and of others of the institutions and persons who have concurred

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