

scheme, by Registering, without payment, but under such conditions as should seem necessary, the names of the two thousand five hundred Members of the Association. Dr. Bezly Thorne seconded this, and the proposal was agreed to.

We are informed that several Members, who evidently had not considered the matter, were afterwards heard to express their wishes that the Charter should be sought for immediately. We frankly confess that this decision of the General Council came upon ourselves as a great surprise. We had understood—though now, on referring to our reports of past meetings, we see that no definite statement has been made on the subject—that the Register was not to be opened until the Royal Charter had been obtained. But the more we reflect upon the matter, the more strongly do we become convinced that this idea of forming the Register at once is most wise and far-sighted.

For example, by this means the Association will gain, by practical experience, a knowledge of the difficulties and necessities of Registration, and therefore what powers are requisite for the performance of the work, as well as what safeguards are needed to insure its complete success and usefulness. Now, were the Royal Charter granted at once, it is almost an absolute certainty that some of these powers, some of these safeguards, might, from lack of knowledge, not be sought for, or, at least, might not be obtained. This opens up a vista of possible troubles, which are appalling in their immensity, and which the Association, tied down and bound by the necessarily rigid wording of a legal document, might, it can well be imagined, never have been able to overcome or to avoid. Further stress, therefore, need hardly be laid upon the extreme importance of thus discovering precisely what powers the Association requires before legal authority of any kind is petitioned for.

But this is by no means the whole advantage of this step. There are many persons, to our own knowledge, who are standing aloof from the Association because they do not comprehend its proposals, and hesitate to cast in their lot with a movement, the future of which they cannot foresee. Many of these, we believe, are holding back from motives of natural caution, and they include persons of the greatest weight and influence in the Nursing world. It is easy to believe that such as these disapprove most strongly of any hasty and ill-considered attempts at reform, knowing well that history has often shown that what is done in haste is repented of at leisure. Such will probably be reassured beyond measure by this decision of the British Nurses' Association to "gang warily," as our Scotch brethren phrase it.

In the first issue of this Journal, Miss Mollett

called attention to the often-quoted words of Sir Henry Acland, written in 1874, strongly urging the importance of the Registration of Nurses. No one can say, therefore, that time sufficient and to spare has not been granted for the elucidation of the idea. For three years past it has been discussed by well-known Hospital Matrons, and for eighteen months it has been brought prominently before the profession and the public. But to some people even fifteen years appears to be all too short a period for reflection. And so, once more, it would seem most wise to give the clearest evidence in printed form of what a Nurses' Register is, and how it is to be conducted, before any unchangeable legal powers are obtained for the purpose. For nothing could more clearly prove to all men that the Association is not managed by revolutionary propagandists than this decision to proceed slowly, but surely, in the matter of Registration.

Then, again, as regards both the public and the Medical profession, it is manifestly to the advantage of both that, if the Registration of Nurses be a good thing, the sooner it is commenced the better; while if it be a useless or a bad scheme, the sooner it fails, is discarded and forgotten, the happier for everyone concerned. We have used these columns freely in upholding the contention that Registration will be an unmixed good to the Nursing profession, and therefore with all confidence we look forward to the success of the experiment, and hail with unfeigned pleasure its speedy inception. In whatever aspect the subject is regarded, the conviction grows that the British Nurses' Association has once more made a very wise decision. It will doubtless strengthen its plea enormously for a Royal Charter, to be able to present before the Privy Council a Register already formed, recognised and of acknowledged use to the public and to Medical men. The Charter would then be asked for, to give increased status to a Register, the national utility of which would have been proved, and could not be disputed, as might now be the case.

It only remains, therefore, to consider how the Association proposes to carry out its plan. A very practical answer is then at once furnished to the question, which has recently been so widely asked, "What will Trained Nurses gain by joining the British Nurses' Association?" It appears, for one thing, that the Members have already gained something very definite. It is announced that, without payment, their names are to be entered upon the Register. Medical men are charged five guineas for their Registration, and although it may be safely presumed that Nurses will not be required to pay anything approaching this amount, it must not be forgotten that the

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