

sideration. It is the opinion of many of those who have had the longest and widest experience as matrons of hospitals and heads of training schools, to the effect of a general registree upon the standard of training will have the very reverse effect to that contemplated by its supporters, namely, to lower instead of raising the standard. This result must be a necessary consequence if my previous contention be correct, that the real character of the nurse will not find a place on the register, for if the register is merely based upon the possession of technical knowledge accompanied by a colourless certificate of good conduct, the value of those moral qualities to which so much importance attaches as a test of efficiency will be entirely lost." Again, I ask your lordships, if these are sensible and well reasoned observations, will the register lead the public in any way to the sources of information from which they can best obtain accurate particulars as to a nurse's qualification? Because remember, the register purports simply to say what was the condition of the nurse at the time she effected her registration, unless something so marked has been brought to the notice of the managers as to make them remove her name. Therefore, there is one of two things necessary, either the register must be regarded as an authority; or else the public will get from it not so much nor so good information as they get at present from the present sources. Then, my lords, at page thirty-nine, there is an extract from the "memorandum on the Registration of Nurses and the Royal British Nurses' Association, 1892." It is this: "How will it affect the efficiency of Nurses; will it render Nurses more efficient or less efficient? Those who are in favour of registration say that a register will hinder the employment of Nurses who are efficient." That is, of course, my lords, the argument put before you to-day. "In support of this view, they point to the precedents afforded by the learned

professions, (in particular by the profession of medicine. In the medical profession, they say registration has had this effect, and that it has not been accompanied by any disadvantages; and therefore they say, a similar result may be expected from the registration of Nurses. The analogy is plausible, certainly; but upon further examination it may prove to be misleading. Those who know most about nursing and the training of Nurses think that the analogy from the doctor to the nurse is misleading, because the calling of the nurse differs in many most essential particulars from the calling of the doctor. Their reasons for holding this view may be briefly stated as follows:—"Whatsoever the system of registration adopted for any profession, it can show respecting any member of the profession, this and only this—that he has had a certain technical training, and has passed certain examinations. This is all that the Medical Register can tell us about any person practising medicine. And although this is but a part of what we like to know about any doctor before we call him in, yet it is the most important part. For that special function of the doctors is a strictly scientific one. The doctor's value depends mainly upon his knowledge and his ability. That he should also be a man of high character and good manners is indeed most desirable. Still a man very defective in these particulars might be an excellent physician or surgeon. As the doctor's function is primarily scientific, his qualification is intellectual, it can be measured with some amount of accuracy by the usual intellectual tests, and the result shown by these tests can be recorded in the professional register. But with a sick Nurse the case is quite different. The function of a Nurse is much more than intellectual, and the qualifications needed for the right performance of this function are not primarily those of intellect, therefore they cannot be satisfactorily tested by examination alone, or be adequately described in a register.

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