

years or not. If it was merely a question of having been engaged for three years nursing the sick, that might possibly account for the fact, I have no means of knowing what steps were taken by the Council for seeing that persons who applied, had been engaged in three years' nursing of the sick as a minimum.

Lord HANNEN.—I have been waiting for the explanation of how all these persons came on the list, and I find it in these words, I think, as to having been engaged for three years in nursing the sick.

Sir R. WEBSTER.—I was not following that. I know in other cases where membership mainly depends in qualification such as accountants, surveyors, engineers, and half-a-dozen other professions, where the Charter was going to establish an examining standard, they did not compel existing practitioners to adopt the standard. There may have been here, and I will take it there was, a qualification of three years engaged in nursing the sick. That might be the reason the names appear, but it would not of course remove the objections that have been urged as to their appearance as trained Nurses in this register. Then, my lords, at the bottom of page 81 occurs this same preface:—"In order to remedy these abuses the . . . Association began in 1890 a system of registration. . . . During the first six months, according to precedent, registration was open to women (whether trained in hospitals or not) who had been engaged for three or more years in nursing the sick. . . . At the end of the period of grace three years' hospital training was made an essential condition of registration, and is now the rule. The Board has carefully investigated the credentials of every applicant for registration, and has the power of removing from the register the name of any nurse who, after full inquiry, may prove herself hereafter to be unworthy of trust."

Well, my lord, I will not argue that point, but I think it is practically admitted that it is very rare that people are prepared to come forward to give their legal testimony.

Lord HANNEN.—Would not that be within the scope of the bye-laws; to determine who should have the power of striking the name off the list.

Sir K. WEBSTER.—By consent of the members, yes, but in no other sense.

Lord HANNEN.—But from their point of view that is all that is necessary, because they keep a register only of those who become members.

Sir R. WEBSTER.—I should not be satisfied with this, but I do ask your lordships respectfully to remember the objects publicly put forward in the evidence for the Association on this point by Mrs. Bedford Fenwick.

Sir HORACE DAVEY.—I do not appear for Mrs. Bedford Fenwick.

Sir R. WEBSTER.—Well, although you do not appear for Mrs. Fenwick it would be scarcely fair not to take her explanation.

The Marquis of RIFON.—They are all to be members of the Association.

Sir R. WEBSTER.—Oh no, certainly not! There are 2,818 members of the Association, and every member of the Association is entitled to be put on the register as a trained Nurse; but persons are to be allowed to be put on the register without being members of the Association. That is why I say that if it is made a term of membership there is no reason why there should not be power to expel, and the Committee entrusted with that power would give to the member whom it was proposed to expel an opportunity of being heard before his name is removed. But, my lords, that only applies to members, and at pre-

sent, of course, we have no knowledge at all as to what bye-laws will be proposed. I point out that they do not publish their rules. Unless they compel every single nurse who desires to be considered a trained nurse to join the Association, then---

Lord OXENBRIDGE.—In some cases perfectly competent nurses have only had twelve months' training. How are such nurses to get upon the register if the qualification is to be three years?

Sir R. WEBSTER.—They cannot possibly get on it. Instead of being a register of trained nurses, it will be—

Lord HANNEN.—It is only a word.

Sir R. WEBSTER.—Your Lordships can unquestionably make the Charter one which will possibly prevent the body proposed to be incorporated from getting some one of the objects it desires. The question is, whether it is to be done by the Charter. I suggest not, and I know of no case where the objects of a chartered incorporation is to keep a register. Now, with reference to the observation just made by Lord Oxenbridge, I would refer you to paragraph 451 of the report of the Select Committee of the House of Lords. It says:—"Different opinions are held as to the length of training requisite before a woman should be sent out with a certificate as a trained nurse. A witness who had had experience as matron of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, was of opinion that nothing less than three years should be taken as the qualifying period, and that no woman ought to be made sister of a ward, or staff nurse, or be sent out to nurse the sick until she had passed through the whole curriculum. Miss Nightingale, on the other hand, has laid down one year as the ordinary period of training, with the proviso that it would be preferable to give two years training to those who will help to train others in their turn. At St. Thomas', where the nursing is organised according to Miss Nightingale's system, the probationer, after her month's trial, binds herself to hospital service for four years; after one year, if she passes her examination, she is registered as a certificated nurse, and thereupon for another three years she holds herself at the disposition of the Committee of the Nightingale Fund for hospital nursing. At other hospitals, the engagement does not extend beyond the period of training, but that period is prolonged to two or three years, so that the Hospital, after it has trained the nurse, may still have the benefit for a time of her trained services; the longer period being fixed rather for the sake of increasing the nurse's experience and for the convenience of the hospital, than for the belief that she would not be fit to receive a certificate sooner. At the London Hospital, for example, a nurse is certificated after two years' service, but is, in some cases, given the duty of a fully qualified nurse in the hospital, or sent out to nurse a private case, occasionally is even appointed to be a sister of a ward, while still called a probationer. Length of service is only one of several elements which go to make a good nurse; and the opinion was strongly expressed that more reliance was to be placed on a system of careful individual supervision and selection than on any extension of the probationary period. At the London Hospital, out of about 210 sisters, nurses and probationers, fully one-half (including about 50 probationers in the second year) were regarded as qualified nurses." Now, my lords, on page 392 of the first report, we have the opinion of Miss Lückes, whom I had in my mind when I referred to this matter some time ago, and who has had great experience in the matter. She is asked: "As to certificated nurses, you say the uncertificated probationers are sometimes put as acting sisters in command of certificated

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[previous page](#)

[next page](#)