

examination, for which the would-be nurse should be required to pay. People do not give their money for what they do not care about. Hundreds imagine or believe that they have a "vocation" for what costs them nothing, and many such gain admission to hospitals, where they are fed, lodged, informed, taught, and even paid without any pecuniary effort on their part. None of these things will make up to an earnest, educated probationer for the want of efficient hospital teaching. The public can have no idea how this varies, not only in different hospitals, but in the different wards of the same hospital. Power to teach ought to be taken largely into consideration in the appointment of Sisters and Staff Nurses in Hospital Training Schools. The Registration Examination would set a standard for the training schools of the country to work up to, and would tend to lessen the proud isolation of each individual hospital. These examinations should be pass and not competitive, and the candidate's whole hospital career as reported by her Matron should be taken into consideration in judging of her fitness for registration. One of the most encouraging features of this movement is that the demand has come from nurses themselves, and already close on 500 are demanding this reform. At the Buffalo Nurses' International Congress last autumn, the 500 delegates present unanimously passed a resolution in favour of State Registration. A similar resolution was passed unanimously a few weeks ago by the Scottish Women's Liberal Federation. This I regard as a remarkable testimony from employers and employed alike. The task we have set before us is no light one. Of course we shall make mistakes, but these I hope we shall rectify when discovered. President Roosevelt once said that the only man who never made mistakes was the man who never did anything. We owe it to the army of first-class nurses who are doing splendid work in this country, to do our best to ensure that in the future no woman shall be entitled to call herself a trained nurse who is not a trained nurse and registered as such, and that the name of any nurse who discredits her profession shall be promptly removed from the Register. At present the Society is in a minority. The honest opinions of all who differ from us must be received with the most respectful attention, and we must at the same time do our best to turn this minority into a majority.

I am,

Faithfully yours,

LOUISA STEVENSON.

13, Randolph Crescent,
Edinburgh.

May 28th, 1902.

THE CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS.

The Chairman then said that the question of the State Registration of Trained Nurses was one of very great importance, both to nurses themselves and also to the general public. There was at present no unity amongst nurses, no standard of efficiency, no uniform curriculum. They were scattered units throughout the country, with no power of communication or organisation. A step towards this had been taken by the formation of Leagues of graduate nurses in connection with their training schools. St. Bartholomew's, she was proud to say, had led the way. The next League founded was that of St. John's House Nurses, followed by the Royal South Hants Hospital, and Guy's Hospital Nurses. She looked on the formation of these Leagues as a matter of the greatest importance. It was much that nurses should thus bind themselves together in an association, but the full benefit would only be felt when all the Leagues bound themselves together in one National League, and thus established communication between the different schools.

The training of a woman who practised private nursing might be of any or no length. Not long ago a medical man came to speak to her about the training of a probationer. She had nursed for him, and had nursed his own child, who had nearly died, through typhoid fever, but she was now desirous of obtaining regular training. It never seemed to occur to this doctor that it was possible his child nearly died because the nurse was untrained.

Another illustration of the kind of nurse supplied to the public was given by Miss Stewart, who said that within the last week she had had a letter from the head of a private nursing institution who said "I have had several nurses on my staff who have failed to obtain your certificate; can you send me any more?" The prospectus enclosed showed that the ordinary fees of £2 2s. a week were charged to the public by this institution, for nurses whom St. Bartholomew's Hospital would not keep on its staff. She did not doubt, however, that the nurses were paid according to their efficiency.

Nurses whose professional duties brought them into close contact with the medical profession could not fail to recognise the extraordinarily strong professional feeling which binds the members together. They looked to those who were their professional superiors for a good example, and they saw that Registration had made them infinitely stronger than before. They thought what was good for the medical profession must be good for themselves also.

The question was of vital importance to the public because private nursing was more easily exploited than any other branch of nursing, and it was probable that in five cases out of six private patients had inadequately trained nurses.

Feeling acutely the need for Registration, the Matrons' Council had initiated a Society having for its sole object the obtaining by Act of Parliament a Bill providing for the Legal Registration of Trained Nurses, and it was with great gratification that she was able to announce that Miss Louisa Stevenson had consented to become its President. She could not speak too strongly of Miss Stevenson's extraordinary knowledge of nursing politics, and her co-operation was of the utmost value.

Registration would at least give us a uniform

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