

State Registration at St. Andrew's House.

In spite of the inclement weather there was a large attendance of nurses at St. Andrew's House, Mortimer Street, on Monday evening, at the meeting convened on the kind invitation of Miss Edith Debenham to consider the question of State Registration of Trained Nurses.

Mrs. DICKINSON BERRY, M.D., took the chair, and said that in presiding she looked forward with pleasure to hearing addresses on the subject from ladies who had thoroughly studied it in all its bearings. Although there might be differences on matters of detail, for the principle of State Registration of trained nurses there was much to be said. At present the public were at the mercy of so-called nurses, whom they took on their own estimate of themselves. Again, in nursing homes, even good ones, medical practitioners knew that women were placed in positions of great responsibility who, upon inquiry, proved to have received perhaps three months' training in a hospital, after which they had been taken on as nurses in these homes. This should not be possible, and no doubt regulation of the nursing profession was required.

Miss ISLA STEWART, Matron of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, was the first speaker. She said that Registration was a well-worn theme, so worn that it might seem that everything that could be said for it had been said already, but the need still remained, and with it the necessity for advocating the principle of Registration. So long ago as 1879, as a probationer at St. Thomas's Hospital, Miss Stewart said she had felt the need of some organisation for nurses. After 23 years of experience her opinion on this point was as strong as ever. At present there was no profession of nursing, for there could be no profession without cohesion, and there was no organisation in the ranks of nurses, no reward of merit, no punishment of evil doing, no standard of efficiency, no discipline. If the future of nursing was to be great or good, it must be by Registration.

Mrs. BEDFORD FENWICK followed, and gave the history of the Registration movement in this country, in our Colonies, and in the United States of America. She showed that the first suggestion of Registration of Nurses was made by Sir Henry Acland in 1875, and that the principle had been supported by such men as the late Professor Marshall, President of the General Medical Council, and the late Sir James Paget. She announced that just before coming to the meeting she had received a copy of the draft Bill which had been drawn up for presentation to the Legislature of the State of Illinois by the State Nurses' Association, providing for the Registration of Nurses in that State.

At the close of the meeting many nurses present, who expressed themselves deeply interested in the question, took forms for themselves and friends preparatory to joining the Society for State Registration of Nurses.

St. Andrew's House, as usual, looked delightfully cheery, and Miss Debenham kindly entertained the guests with dainty cakes and refreshing tea and coffee.

The League of St. Bartholomew's Hospital Nurses.

The Winter Social Gathering of the League of St. Bartholomew's Hospital Nurses was held on Saturday last in the Medical School Library of the Hospital. The members were received by the President, Miss Isla Stewart, and rapidly they poured in until, by five o'clock, it required some skill to move across the room. Amongst those present were Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, Mrs. Howard Marsh, Vice-President of the League, Mrs. Wates, the new Hon. Secretary, Mrs. Walter Spencer, Miss Smedley, Matron of St. George's Hospital, Miss Finch, Matron of University College Hospital, Miss Cox-Davies, Matron of the New Hospital for Women, Miss Barling, of Kidderminster, Miss Cartwright, of Brighton, Miss Rumbold, from Swanley, Miss Waind, from Guildford, and a host of other members. After full justice had been done to the tea and coffee, cakes and sandwiches, which, for excellence, are second to none, some admirable vocal and instrumental music was keenly appreciated. Mrs. Howard Marsh presided at the piano, and the songs rendered by Miss Barling and Miss Musson (Sister Luke) proved that it is possible for members of the nursing profession to keep up former accomplishments to a high standard of excellence. On all sides we heard expressed the pleasure which these gatherings afford to members. "They are appreciated by nurses in London," said one member, "but you do not know what they mean to us in the country. It is the only time we ever meet our former colleagues, and it is impossible to say how much we look forward to these meetings."

If it be true that nurses must play together in order to learn to work together, then such gatherings as those of the Bart.'s League are not only to be regarded as pleasant social functions, but they have a definite educational value. The thing which women most need to give full effect to the value of their work is cohesion and co-ordinate action. To this end they need to know and trust each other, to respect one another's work, and to appreciate the special gifts that each is able to bring to the common good. We, therefore, welcome all opportunities of meeting members of our profession, and one of the pleasantest of these is the one periodically afforded by the League of St. Bartholomew's Hospital Nurses.

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