

five. Unquestionably, a bogus nurse could succeed in making a practice.

Of the various partially-trained nurses who all held certificates, between which the public found it almost impossible to discriminate, were those who had had three months' or six months' training as monthly nurses, or three months in a children's hospital. There were a number of such nurses practising in Bournemouth.

Miss Forrest then, in reply to Dr. Hutchinson, described the lines upon which her own institution was organised.

In reply to the Chairman, she said that her experience had taught her to believe that a system of registration by the State would be a protection to both the public and to nurses. She kept a register of the nurses she employed, but she could not keep in touch with them after they left her unless they chose to write to her. She did not often have trouble with her staff; it was exceptional, as she took very great care in selecting it, but she had had trouble. There was nothing to prevent uncertificated nurses wearing any uniform they liked; as a matter of fact they wore hers.

Nurses were not always selected by doctors. Quite half of them were selected by the patients or their friends. She knew of an instance where the doctor did not desire a certain monthly nurse to be employed because he knew she was incompetent. The patient insisted. Fortunately for the patient the nurse fell down and broke her arm, and a properly-trained nurse was engaged. The employers were delighted with her, and said "now we know the difference."

Asked as to the standard of examination, Miss Forrest said that she presumed the Central Governing Body appointed would be composed of experts, and this should be decided by them. There should be a certain amount of theoretical knowledge required, tested by a written paper, and also a practical clinical examination in hospital wards. There were certain things which could only be learnt by constant practice, and she found nurses frequently deficient in practical knowledge. The cost of examination should, she thought, be covered by a fee of £1 1s. or £2 2s. She considered nurses were able to afford this, or more if necessary. She was quite sure it would be worth their while to do so.

In regard to private nursing homes and institutions, it would be of advantage to the public if they were under control and inspection. There was a great deal of abuse, and the employment of inefficient women. It was of extreme importance that private nurses should be competent and trustworthy. Their work was extremely responsible, and there was no possibility of supervision by their superintendents in private houses, so it was of great importance that their competence should be tested before they were sent out.

The Chairman asked Miss Forrest if she had seen the Blue Book, and she replied in the affirmative. She had seen that one of the most distinguished opponents of State Registration had asserted that it was impossible to test the personal qualities of a nurse by examination. This was, of course, absolutely true, but no candidate should be admitted to examination who did not produce a certificate from the Matron of her Training-school that she had conducted herself satisfactorily while training, and had shown herself possessed of the qualities desirable in a nurse.

Asked if there was no chance of placing the wrong

kind of nurse on the Register, Miss Forrest replied that she could be removed for due cause shown, whereas certificates given at present remained the private property of the nurse, and could not be withdrawn when they had once been bestowed. It would not be advisable to accept the certificates of the hospitals as a qualification for registration. From long experience she was now able to judge which certificates were worth considering and which were not.

As an instance of one of the duties with which a nurse should be acquainted the witness instanced the administration of oxygen. To this Sir John Tuke took strong exception, and said this was not a nurse's duty, but that of the surgeon or physician or house staff. Miss Forrest pointed out she was not speaking of nurses in hospitals but in private houses, who often were required to administer it.

In reply to the chairman, Miss Forrest did not consider that two classes of nurses should be registered. She thought it would cause confusion. She instanced also the outcry when the Local Government Board proposed to give a nurse the title of "qualified" at the end of one year. It was so great that the proposal had never been carried into effect.

Lord Morpeth inquired whether in Germany two classes of dentists were not registered. Miss Forrest did not know, but thought if they were, that in Germany they would certainly wear different uniforms.

At the conclusion of Miss Forrest's evidence, the Committee adjourned for half an hour. On their re-assembling Miss Edla R. Wortabet was called upon to give evidence. After stating her professional experience, Miss Wortabet said that at present each hospital was a law to itself. The training a probationer received depended on the efficiency, or the reverse, of the Matron and Sisters in each institution, and the pains they took in giving instruction. Something more definite was required. She considered that an unbiassed examination was desirable. By this means a standard would be maintained to which all schools would have to work up. If the Matrons of those institutions where the standard was not up to the mark found that their candidates were rejected, it would be an incentive to them to improve the instruction given. She would like to corroborate the statement that there was at present no uniformity of training, and a certificate of training was no guarantee that a nurse was fully trained.

In regard to the fee for certification and registration she thought this ought to be high. She did not think that the entrance to the profession of nursing, which she hoped would be created, should be made too cheap. She considered that from £2 2s. to £3 3s. was not too much to pay for the privilege of Registration. Nursing should be in the hands of educated women. If it were a more dignified profession it would attract a better class, and the failure of the family would not be the one selected to enter its ranks, as was often the case now.

Far from levelling down to a lower grade of nurses, she thought all should start on the same level, and be required to pass an examination for Registration, but that there should be a higher examination for those who undertook responsibility as teachers.

The Committee then adjourned until Thursday, April 13th, at 11.30, when the witness was Miss Eva C. E. Lückes, Matron of the London Hospital. This evidence was given too late for publication in this issue. The date of the next meeting of the Committee is Thursday, May 11, at 11.30 a.m.

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