

definite standard, quoting, as an example, the standards existing among school teachers.

The resolution was then put to the meeting and carried, there being only two voting against it.

Mr. Ley, in proposing that the resolution be sent to the Select Committee of the House of Commons, which was now taking evidence as to the expediency of the Registration of Nurses, said he thought the hospital could not have been used for a better purpose than that for which it had been used that afternoon.

Mr. Hepburn, in seconding this, said as a member of the public, he wished for some better guarantee than existed at present as to the knowledge and character of nurses entering his home, and had much pleasure in seconding the proposal to send the resolution to the quarter where it would be most effective.

After votes of thanks to Miss Hughes for addressing the meeting, and to Mr. Pope for presiding over the meeting, the guests were entertained most hospitably at tea by Miss Smale, the kindly Matron of the hospital.

### The City Financiers' Registration Scheme.

An argument is being advanced in relation to the attempt of the City Financiers to obtain powers of control over nurses which we consider very misleading—namely, that their scheme for the examination and control of nurses with general training is analogous to that which, for many years previous to the passing of the Midwives' Act, was carried out by the Obstetrical Society of London in the examination of midwives.

There is, however, no analogy between the two. The Obstetrical Society of London is a Society composed entirely of medical practitioners who have specialised and are experts in obstetric practice. If this purely medical society was not competent, in the absence of any State authority, to endeavour to establish some standard for women practising midwifery, what body was? But it must be remembered the Society was not incorporated; it published no Roll of members, and, beyond the fact that latterly those who held its diploma, or the certificate substituted for a diploma of recent years, undertook to return that certificate if due cause were shown for its withdrawal, the Society exercised no disciplinary powers or control over those who held it, nor were their professional liberties in any way interfered with. The movement was purely an educational one. If, on the other hand, we turn to the Constitution of the City Financiers' scheme, we find that the most elementary principles of British constitutional government are violated. All the signatories to the Memorandum, who are seeking arbitrary and tyrannous powers of control over nurses, are laymen. There is not one doctor or trained nurse amongst them. The Council is to be selected by laymen, and the nurses, who are to be controlled by this body, have no voice in its appointment. Again,

the fact that three persons would have the power to ruin the professional career of any nurse by removing her name from the Register issued by the Society, without even giving her an opportunity of defending herself, is sufficient to condemn the scheme.

Had voluntary registration never been attempted in this country, and failed because of the unjust and arbitrary conduct of the Hon. Medical Officers of the Royal British Nurses' Association in the years which followed its attainment of its Royal Charter, nurses might not realise the peril of the situation with which they are confronted, but the Barlow case stands for all time as an instance of the attempted intimidation of an innocent woman, and of the extreme danger of placing thousands of women industrial workers under a lay and medical autocracy—that is, practically under the domination of their employers—without any means of self-defence.

In a leading article on the Memorandum and Articles of Association of the Incorporated Society for Promoting the Higher Education and Training of Nurses in the *Indian Medical Record*, the view is expressed that the public spirit, apart from a professional view, will see the absurdity and fallacy of the outcome of such a Society when it comes to know that its composition is made up of seven gentlemen (laymen), who propose to organise, control, select, teach, or have taught, and preside over all matters referable to nursing according to their own fantastic views and ideas.

After describing the powers sought by the Society, our contemporary observes:—

Coming as all this does from unprofessional persons, it will be quite obvious to all professional members that any laxity or error in carrying out such a scheme would certainly mean supplying the public with certificated nurses quite incompetent to bear the very responsible duties nurses have to fulfil.

Apart from this, surely the medical profession and the staffs of the great hospitals of the United Kingdom will not consent to place themselves in so humiliating a position of subserviency as to have themselves controlled by such a self-appointed body as the Council of the said Society.

It is noteworthy that it is only some ten weeks ago since the scheme for the incorporation of the above Society was made public. The widespread condemnation it has aroused has been of unusual intensity.

The inhabitants of Lincoln, who have for a long time been paying for every pint of pure water they had, may now obtain it free from the Great Northern Railway Company, who convey it to the city, but it has to be fetched by the consumers from the railway depôts. A resident says: "There is not much to be seen in the streets now except nurses and people carrying water."

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