

No one was infallible, not even the richest. Nurses did not belong to the feeble-minded section of the community; on the contrary they were intelligent, and increasingly so day by day, and would not in these days put up with unprofessional dictation.

THE CENTRAL HOSPITAL COUNCIL FOR LONDON.

Other members of the R.B.N.A. Deputation having spoken, the Central Hospital Council for London was called upon, when Mr. Charles Burt said that in view of the present proceedings in Parliament the application appeared most out of place. He differed, however, from the former speaker, inasmuch as he thought the consideration of the application should not be postponed, but dealt with immediately. The suggested society would be a close corporation which would not satisfy the nurses, and he was quite sure it would not satisfy the hospitals.

The Hon. Sydney Holland, Chairman of the London Hospital, said that the Central Hospital Council for London objected to the principle of Registration altogether. Registration could not ensure a good nurse; a woman a hundred years old might still be on the Register, and therefore, presumably, still fit to nurse the public. Registration would afford the public a continuing guarantee that a woman was a good nurse, although she might have ceased to be so. The difference between the proposed Registration and that by the State was that the scheme now proposed would probably fail while State Registration would succeed. In relation to a Matron's reference being a necessity for Registration Mr. Holland said such a reference would be perfunctory; thus, at the London Hospital if they had anyone not particularly good they could shunt her on to the R.B.N.A. (Shame.) What, asked the speaker, did Lord Rothschild know about nursing? Where were the nursing authorities? All the signatories to the Memorandum were laymen with the exception of Mr. Cosmo Bonsor, who as Treasurer of Guy's knew something of nursing. Mr. Bonsor here repudiated all such knowledge; he "knew nothing." "Then heaven help the thing," said Mr. Holland. "I thought that at least you did know something."

THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF IRELAND.

Mr. Swanzy said he spoke as Vice-President of the Royal College of Surgeons of Ireland. The full control of the proposed Society was vested in seven laymen, not in the nurses themselves; but nurses should govern themselves, and nurses and the medical profession should be directly and largely represented, any other system would be intolerable and contrary to precedent in other professions. Modern nursing owed its high standard almost entirely to women. Further, nurses should have control of the money they themselves contributed. One mode of Registration on a sound basis would be acceptable to Ireland, but the present suggestion was absolutely unsound.

THE BRITISH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION.

Sir Victor Horsley, on behalf of the British Medical Association, said that he and his colleagues had given time to come there that day because of the question of principle involved. The time had long gone by for private societies to carry out State purposes.

He had to report that the last Annual Representative Meeting of the British Medical Association passed a resolution in favour of the principle of State Regis-

tration. That meeting was strongly of opinion that medical practitioners felt the need of a system of State Registration for Nurses. The medical profession would only, however, accept State Registration, not a pseudo scheme. There was no representation of medical practitioners and nurses of any kind whatever.

The medical profession was strongly opposed to the application of the proposed Society, and objected to its incorporation under any circumstances whatever. They were absolutely with the R.B.N.A. as to the infringement of its Charter. The medical profession was acting in the public interest in supporting State Registration. It felt that Registration by the State would afford the public a guarantee of the training a nurse had received. Also, nurses themselves had been hardly used, and State Registration would for them be a measure of justice.

THE MIDLAND MEDICAL SOCIETY.

Other members of the deputation having spoken, Dr. Langley Browne, who also represented the Midland Medical Society, said that it was only those who lived in the provinces who were really able to realise the danger of untrained nurses. In the provinces nurses were frequently sent out by companies, and the only remedy for the maintenance of professional, as apart from commercial, standards was by their registration by the State. The present scheme was an attempt to make another corner in nurses on a larger scale. Lawyers, doctors, and even the clergy managed their own affairs, and the most acceptable method of organisation for nurses would be a well-considered measure of State Registration.

THE MATRONS' COUNCIL AND THE LEAGUE OF ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S HOSPITAL NURSES.

Miss Isla Stewart, on behalf of the Matrons' Council and the League of St. Bartholomew's Hospital Nurses, said that those whom she represented considered that the government of nurses should be largely in their own hands.

When the intentions of the City Financiers were made public, the Matrons' Council and the Society for the State Registration of Trained Nurses conjointly convened a public meeting, held at 20, Hanover Square, when resolutions, emphatically protesting against the attempt of the Signatories to the Memorandum of the proposed Society to obtain control over nurses were passed.

The reasons why the Societies which she represented objected were that the signatories were gentlemen who had no expert knowledge of nursing, and that no provision was made for the direct representation of nurses on its Governing Body. They were of opinion that the powers sought for could not be usefully or successfully exercised except by a body composed of professional persons, upon which trained nurses had direct and sufficient representation.

The Government of the Nursing Profession was not a philanthropic scheme. They were large numbers of nurses, fully trained, competent to carry out the necessary work, and to defray their own expenses.

THE SOCIETY FOR THE STATE REGISTRATION OF TRAINED NURSES.

Mrs. Bedford Fenwick said:—

I have been deputed to represent the Society for the State Registration of Trained Nurses, which numbers upwards of 1,500 Matrons and nurses, and the object of which is "To obtain an Act of Parliament pro-

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)