

Dr. Langley Browne told the Committee that the ordinary general practitioners of the country held, if possible, very much more strongly than the consultants that the registration of nurses was desirable. The opposition came almost altogether from London. The better trained a nurse the less likely she was, always, to attempt to compete with the medical man, a point of view borne out by Sir James Crichton Browne, Dr. Bezly Thorne, Dr. Hyla Greves, and other medical witnesses. Dr. Browne also said that as a rule partially-trained nurses exacted the same pay that fully-trained nurses exact, "because the very fact of their charging the same as a fully-trained nurse they think stamps them as being fully trained, and that is their only claim very often."

The question of the registration of mental nurses was dealt with by Professor White, ex-President of the Medico-Psychological Association, Sir James Crichton Browne, and Dr. Shuttleworth. All were in favour of a system of registration.

Next, to consider the evidence of Matrons and nurses. Mrs. Bedford Fenwick supported the evidence given by Miss Stewart, Miss Huxley, and Miss Forrest. She described the foundation and growth of the registration movement in this and other countries, and claimed that the education of a nurse should be based on sound principles. Mrs. Fenwick handed in (1) an abstract of the various Acts already in operation; she also handed in (2) a copy of the Resolutions passed in support of the principle of State Registration, and (3) of the Reply of the Society for the State Registration of Trained Nurses to the statement made by the Central Hospital Council for London. (4) A list containing the particulars of a number of nursing scandals, which is inserted as Appendix 3. In regard to this list Mrs. Fenwick stated: "I put this in evidence to prove what we always claim, namely, that any woman can call herself a nurse and pose as a nurse, and bring discredit on the nursing profession. I think a large number of these cases prove that fact over and over again. Over and over again these women have gone into the dock in uniform, some of whom have had a nursing training, and some of whom have not. There is no means by which in a court of law they can verify whether these women are nurses or no; there is no such thing as a Register. I believe in every court of law the Medical Register is kept, and they can refer to it." The witness showed that the consideration of the question of State Registration compelled attention to educational standards, and that the lack of an educational standard for Matrons is really at the root of the disorganised condition of nursing education throughout the country. She advocated the inspection and registration of nursing homes under the municipal authorities. She also dealt with the question of finance. With regard to the alleged danger that registration would induce the nurse to be a sort of competitor of the doctor, she showed that the very greatest harmony existed between the medical faculty and the nursing staff in well-organised schools. Friction when it arose usually resulted from a lack of training on the part of the nurse, a lack of sense of discipline, and a lack of knowledge of medical and nursing etiquette.

Mrs. Fenwick made an earnest appeal that justice to nurses, as a class, should receive due consideration.

Miss L. L. Dock described the working of Registration Acts in the United States.

Miss Christina Forrest dealt with the different standards in different hospitals, and the difficulty of tracing nurses either in their training-school or afterwards. She told the Committee that the number of untrained, semi-trained and bogus nurses who apply to her to be taken on her staff is simply appalling, and said that out of 460 nurses, so-called, who applied to her last year, she took on every one she thought had been properly trained, or was likely to do the Institute credit. The number was sixty-five.

Miss Shannon emphasised the importance of a searching test of the ability of people who are to nurse, and the necessity for the establishment of a standard.

Miss Wortabet advocated the maintenance of a high standard for nurses. At present candidates might be girls of means, or quite poor girls, or the failures of a family. At present many a girl who was not attractive enough to marry, or clever enough to earn her living in any other way, was sent into a hospital to train as a nurse. That ought not to be done.

Miss Beatrice Kent drew attention to the high percentage on their earnings charged to nurses by many institutions. She had heard of as much as 25 per cent. The nurses were oppressed. Sweating was hardly too strong a term to use.

In a paper which Miss Kent handed in, and which appears as an appendix, she states that she opposes the suggestion that there is so much criminality amongst nurses. No witness, so far as we know, made the suggestion. Miss Kent, in her own evidence, speaks of "nurses who put on a bonnet and cloak and masquerade as nurses, fraudulent people who attempt nursing without any qualification at all." She states she has come across many of these nurses. Some with a little training, some with very little, some with a few weeks or so, or a few months. As she desires registration that these women may be eliminated from the ranks of recognized nurses, her attitude to others who desire the same thing is quite incomprehensible.

It is not certificated nurses who injure their profession by criminal practices, and through ignorance of the basis of scientific nursing, but the women who assume their name and their uniform. It is only right to the public and to the certificated nurse that there should be a line of demarcation between trained and untrained. The consequences involved are too serious for present conditions to be permitted to continue.

From the point of view of the public, the evidence of Lady Helen Munro-Ferguson was a masterly statement of the case for registration.

Mr. Patten McDougall described a system already enforced by the Scottish Local Government Board, and Mr. Motion reported that the Parish Council of Glasgow had unanimously adopted a resolution in favour of the State Registration of Nurses.

Against Registration.

Miss Eva C. Lückes, Matron of the London Hospital, described the system of nurse-training in that school. She opposed the enforcement of the three years' standard, and said it was a great mistake and very demoralising for workers to hold them back merely to fill in time. She deprecated increasing the ground which a nurse's knowledge ought to cover, and thought it likely to bring her into conflict with doctors. It was a great pity for nurses to spend their time in nursing a variety of cases for which they might never be wanted. The hospital which sent out a nurse should be able to judge of her capacity for nursing the case.

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