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Nursing in 1905.

As our present issue is the last in 1905, according to our usual custom we are devoting some space to reviewing the most important events in the nursing world during the year.

THE REGISTRATION MOVEMENT.

Nothing is more remarkable in the nursing world than the way in which the movement for State Registration has taken hold of nurses all over the world. In olden days it was the custom, in accordance with a prearranged signal, to light beacons on the highest points, and thus for places far apart to communicate one with the other. In this country the Registration beacon was lighted eighteen years ago, and its light burned solitarily for awhile, now answering beacons are alight burning with various degrees of brightness, in South Africa, New Zealand, Tasmania, Australia, the United States, Canada, and, nearer home, in Germany and Holland. Thus nurses the world over rally round the same signal, are inspired by the same hope, and united in a common cause, are working to the same end.

In this country great impetus has been given to the Registration movement by the verdict of the Select Committee of the House of Commons, appointed by the Prime Minister in 1904, and reappointed in the present year to inquire into the expediency of providing for the Registration of Nurses. As is now well-known, the Committee, after taking much evidence reported "that it is desirable that a Register of Nurses should be kept by a Central Body appointed by the State." Thus the contention of Registrationists that such a system was necessary was fully vindicated.

The history of the appointment of this Committee is instructive. The leaders of the Registration campaign having studied the history of the organisation of the medical and other professions, were convinced that their case must be placed before such a tribunal as a Select Committee of Parliament before it would obtain widespread public support. Therefore, in the year 1898 they communicated with Members of Parliament, over forty of

whom promised in writing to support the application for the appointment of a Select Committee to inquire into the whole nursing question. A medical member of the House of Commons, since dead, and a Vice-President of the Royal British Nurses Association, the hon. officers of which were bitterly opposed to State Registration, assured the Premier that such an inquiry was absolutely unnecessary, as the nursing of the sick was in a most satisfactory condition. Mr. Balfour, acting, no doubt, upon what he believed to be good advice, refused its appointment. In 1902 the Society for the State Registration of Trained Nurses was formed, and, as soon as it felt strong enough, it determined to put its principles and cause to the test. It therefore (in 1903) approached Members of Parliament, and the support received was of such a character that the Members who espoused the cause were able to persuade the Premier that the inquiry asked for would be of national value, and a Select Committee to inquire into the expediency of providing for the Registration of Nurses was appointed.

The result was that the Registration cause received overwhelming support, not only from trained nurses resident in England, Scotland, and Ireland, but from influential medical and other bodies. Indeed, not half the witnesses who were prepared to give evidence in support of State Registration could be heard. On the other hand the evidence against Registration, although no doubt given in good faith, was of an unconvincing character, really narrowed down to and representing the opposition of the officials of the London Hospital. It is indeed worthy of note that the Matron of that institution was the only trained nurse in the whole of the United Kingdom who opposed the Registration of Nurses before the Committee.

The Report of the Committee places the Registration question on a new plane. It has formed the subject of a judicial inquiry by the country's legislators, who have deliberately reported to the House as the result of their exhaustive investigation their opinion that the State Registration of Nurses is desirable. All,

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