

Progress of State Registration.

TOO GOOD TO BE LOST.

To the great regret of all her colleagues Miss Isla Stewart, whose work for the State Registration of Trained Nurses places her in the front rank of its supporters, was unable to attend at the Privy Council Office, when the Deputation, to which we referred last week, waited on the Earl of Crewe, Lord President of the Council. We print below the notes of the speech which Miss Stewart had intended to deliver on that occasion.

My Lord,—It is my duty as a nurse to put before you the great need of some legislation which will give legal status and recognition to the fully-trained nurses. After three years' arduous training a nurse finds herself to-day on the same footing as the untrained and half-trained women who compete with her. We do not in any way ask that those women should not be allowed to nurse the sick. We only ask that the fully-trained nurse should be hall-marked and legally recognised as a skilled worker.

For many years nurses have been alive to the injustice of their position, and after much consideration have come to the conclusion that the only thing which will get to the root of the evil is State Registration. The Society for the State Registration of Nurses has drafted a Bill which was unanimously approved at the General Meeting of the Society. There are one or two points in that Bill that are of sufficient importance for me to mention them to your Lordship.

The first is the institution of a General Nursing Council which will be the Governing Body of the profession. We feel strongly that this Council should consist of a sufficient number of members to permit it to perform the very numerous and arduous duties which it will have to deal with. We also think that this Council can only adequately perform those duties if it consists largely of representative members, elected by the nurses themselves, who will surrender into its hands the government, organisation, and discipline of their profession.

The second point to which I should like to claim your attention, is that as a community we are anxious to see a minimum standard of efficiency established, and that this should be tested by examination, the Examining Board being under the control and supervision of the Council.

Thirdly, I should like to point out that although nurses are not rich they are self-sup-

porting, and that they are perfectly able to pay a fee for examination and Registration which will cover the expenses of the Council in maintaining both.

At present chaos reigns among us, for we have no rule as to the method or length of training, no educational code and no standard of efficiency. Each training school is a law unto itself, for there is no supervision and no attempt at a common basis. All training schools issue certificates of efficiency, some of which are of real value, others not worth the paper they are written on. These certificates are all accepted by the public as evidence of efficiency. As they have no means of estimating their value, in this way much injustice is done to women who have worked hard and attained proficiency in their profession. We have no hope of reducing this chaos to something like order, for we have no power to deal with it. Our only hope lies in State Registration, which will give us some form of self-government.

As will be seen in the account we published last week of the reception by the Lord President of the Council of the Deputation above referred to on the State Registration of Trained Nurses, the Deputation attended on the invitation of, and was introduced by, Mr. H. J. Tennant, M.P., Chairman of the late Select Committee on Nursing of the House of Commons. The members of the Deputation, with the exception of Miss S. E. Hampson, President of the Irish Nurses' Association, attended in their individual capacity, not as representing any societies.

The American Nursing World.

Mrs. Hampton Robb, in preparing a revised edition of her text-book on nursing, has brought it thoroughly up to date. Two new chapters have been added, and elsewhere new material has been substituted for old. Instead of the schedule for a two years' course, a suggestive outline for the division of work over the three years' of instruction, which is made to include a six months' preliminary course, has been given. The revised edition is published by E. C. Koeckert, 715, Rose Building, Cleveland, Ohio. The price remains the same, 2 dols.

So extensive is the material for the history of nursing which Miss Nutting and Miss Dock are preparing, in collaboration, that the work cannot be finished before the autumn, as they are making a full and comprehensive study of nursing in all ages and countries.

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