

should feel that they must go back to them from time to time, that they should be kept in relation with the Matrons, who would reprove or encourage them, and generally step in to safeguard the public.

If the proposed method of registration were carried through it would stereotype the movement for giving autonomy to nurses in connection with whom he was sorry to have heard the word profession used. He feared it would make them independent not only of doctors, but of the Matrons and of nursing associations. He was not jealous of, but very sympathetic with, the desire that the work of nurses should be properly recognised. He submitted that a Directory would meet all their needs and differentiate the good from the second rate. In his opinion the methods of the Registrationists simulated the bad methods of Trade Unions. Nursing education was now in a state of flux, and he was glad that the question of Registration had been delayed. There were some who thought that the education of nurses was too academic, and hoped to see some modification of the present system if only it was not fixed by Registration. If only things could be kept quiet for a bit, the training schools could arrange matters, and we should not have a lot of nursing prigs, but women who were practically efficient.

In regard to Nursing Homes a Directory would be a security. Some were splendid, others were merely commercial speculations and the nursing, especially on night duty, was inefficient. If a Directory were established then every patient, or every one who took a patient to a Home, should ask to see one and look up the experience of his nurses.

THE LORD PRESIDENT'S REPLY.

Lord Crewe said he had listened with close attention to the three speeches he had just heard. He was grateful to Mr. Holland for mentioning his connection with the Nightingale Fund because it proved that though he was not an expert yet he was interested in nursing, and glad to apply his mind to the subject of helping to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion on the subject of Registration.

It struck him as strange that there should be such a strong and marked difference of opinion on the matter. He was sure that those present would not dispute that on the opposite side there were those whose opinions could not be ignored. It was impossible also to ignore the conclusions arrived at by the Select Committee which considered the question. Its Report must have due weight. He supposed that everyone would admit, as a purely abstract proposition, that if a system of Registration could be devised which would afford a guarantee to the public and not inflict injury upon nurses it would be very desirable.

He was bound to say that Mr. Harben was scarcely fair to the advocates of Registration when he declared that such a system would mean an absolute guarantee to everyone who employed a nurse that that nurse was efficient, and that no nurse who was not on the Register could be so described. In his recollection of the evidence offered to the Select Committee so broad a proposition as that was hardly laid down. What was hoped was that Registration would lead institutions to adopt

improved methods of nursing education, but its advocates did not claim that it would dispense with enquiry in the case of individual nurses.

In regard to the Teachers' Register, he could assure Mr. Holland that he was not going to draw him on that subject. He agreed that there was little, if any, analogy between the Register of medical men, or even of midwives, and one of nurses. A Nurses' Register must be formed on the merits of the case and not on that analogy.

The various objections raised by the Deputation would receive due consideration. When they gave evidence before the Select Committee neither Mr. Holland nor Dr. Norman Moore, if he remembered rightly, had suggested a Directory.

Lord Crewe said further that, as he had informed a previous Deputation, it was impossible for the Government to take up the question of State Registration of Nurses during the present Session, and he was afraid he could make no promises as to the next. At the same time it was extremely desirable that as much discussion as possible should take place on the subject.

There was, or shortly would be, a Bill for the Registration of Nurses before the House of Commons. He did not know if the present Deputation thought of placing their views before Parliament in a similar way. If so, he supposed they would introduce a short Bill empowering the Privy Council to start a Directory.

This Register — here a shocked voice said it was a Directory not a Register which was recommended by the Central Hospital Council. Lord Crewe said he thought the word Register was mentioned. It appeared on consulting the Memorandum the appointment of a Registrar was recommended. The Lord President said they were getting rather dangerously near a Register. This gentleman, who, for the present, had better be nameless, was presumably to be appointed by the Privy Council and to stand in some relation to it which he did not quite understand, but at any rate he gathered that it was suggested the Directory should have a semi-official character, as provision was to be made for an appeal to the Privy Council. In thinking over the question of Parliamentary action, Lord Crewe reminded the Deputation that there was little time in the Commons, but that the House of Lords was open to the discussion of questions of an abstract character.

The Deputation having thanked the Lord President for the attentive hearing he had given them, then withdrew.

We congratulate the Central Hospital Council for London on having abandoned its *non possumus* and impossible attitude. Having conceded that something must be done, let that something be done wisely and well. We are also inclined to congratulate the nursing profession on the fact that not one of its number spoke on this occasion in support of so unpractical a scheme as that proposed in the Memorandum. Next week we shall deal at some length with various points raised by the Deputation.

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