

only a fortnight in which to find a Member of the House of Lords who would move the rejection of this dangerous measure, and voice their views concerning the organization of their own profession.

On March 31st Lord Balfour of Burleigh received a Deputation of Members of the Society for the State Registration of Nurses, and in deference to their strongly expressed opinions, in opposition to his Bill, agreed to defer the Second Reading till after the Easter Recess.

Eventually it was taken on May 6th, before which date Lord Ampthill had consented to move its rejection, and thereby hangs a tale!

As this Bill secretly drafted had been sprung upon us—leaving us only a few days in which to defeat it—as those days sped by our anxiety increased. I haunted the Lobby of the Lords, but without success, those to whom I appealed were disinclined to fight the nurses' battle, far from a popular thing to do. Returning one evening very tired from this seemingly hopeless quest, I went to my study after dinner, to wrestle with fate. By the last post came a letter. It was from Miss Munro, the Matron of the Bedford County Hospital, in it she asked "Do you know Lord Ampthill? He is our Chairman. He might help us if invited," and then she described Lord Ampthill's altruistic and statesmanlike qualities.

I did not hesitate a moment, I took up my pen (it seemed inspired) and wrote to Lord Ampthill—I know it was a good letter—straight, not only from head, but heart. I asked him to receive a small deputation to listen to our petition. I ran out and posted that letter full of hope. Almost by return of post Lord Ampthill most kindly consented to receive us at an early date. We went, Isla Stewart, Helen Pearse, Margaret Breay and myself. Nothing could have been kinder than our reception.

We placed our case before him, our urgent need. Lord Ampthill promised to consider our request that he would move the rejection of the Directory Bill in the House of Lords, and two days later he wrote consenting to do so, and so masterly was his advocacy, we never had a set back.

If the Central Hospital Council had found a powerful advocate, the Society for State Registration of Nurses was indeed fortunate in securing one much more distinguished in Lord Ampthill. Patriot, statesman, and

sportsman, his distinguished career culminating as Acting Viceroy and Governor General of India, was revered by us all.

THE OFFICIAL DIRECTORY OF NURSES BILL.

On May 6th, 1908, *The Times* published a letter signed by the late Lord Roberts, F.M., Lord Monkswell, and Lord Ampthill asking the support of members of the House of Lords in their opposition to the Official Directory of Nurses Bill, and reminding their Lordships that a Bill for the State Registration of Nurses, founded on principles which met the

views of a great majority of the medical and nursing professions and which had been approved by a Select Committee of the House of Commons, was now before the other House. That the Bill of which Lord Balfour of Burleigh had charge, proposed a different system concerning which there had been no public discussion, and which was opposed to the aims of those who had during 20 years of public discussion obtained public approval of the principle of State Registration. It was, in fact, a measure of obstruction, initiated by a few private individuals.

Lord Balfour, in moving the Second Reading of the Directory Bill on May 6th, presented a very poor case, and in moving its rejection Lord Ampthill had little difficulty in exposing its fallacies.

Lord Ampthill said it was to be regretted that the Cobdenite doctrine of *laissez-faire* of his noble friend extended so far that he would refuse to a great profession, and to the general public, that protection which has become the established principle of legislation not only in this country, and the Colonies, but in many foreign countries. He detailed the support the principle of State Registration of Nurses had received, including the General Medical Council, the British Medical Association, &c., and the Bills before the

House of Commons. He said the promoters of those Bills were earnestly opposed to that of his noble friend, because they regarded it as deliberately and wantonly hostile to the principle of State Registration which they had at heart. His noble friend had not mentioned one medical or nursing organisation which had supported him.

Suffice it to say that when the House divided, there voted:—

For the Bill .. .. .	20
Against the Bill .. .. .	53

Thus by irrefutable logic Lord Ampthill defeated a



THE RIGHT HON. THE LORD AMPHILL, G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.

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