

Miss MOLLETT, Matron of the Chelsea Infirmary, then laid before the meeting the scheme of Registration of Nurses under a Royal Charter. Miss Mollett said that the Association was composed of Doctors and Nurses only, as it was the opinion of the Association that only Doctors and Nurses were qualified to decide as to the curriculum of training, and the results of that training. The public were interested in the results of the training, but had no concern with the means taken to bring about those results. At present the term "Trained Nurse" was a term of no value; anyone without any training might claim that title, and there was no law to hinder her. The Association, therefore, aimed at seeking a Royal Charter, under the terms of which a Nurse's name would be placed on a roll, with the name of training school attached, and then she would receive a legal right to practise her profession. Her claim to call herself a "Trained Nurse" would be examined by a competent body before her name was placed on the roll. That competent body would be a Board composed of Doctors and Nurses appointed by the Charter to carry out its provisions. In this respect the Registration differed from that of an ordinary registry office, which might be undertaken by anyone, but carried with it no certificate of competency.

A long and active discussion then followed. After the usual votes of thanks the meeting dispersed, and it was felt by all present that the work the Association had taken in hand, and the objects it had in view, were such as would recommend themselves to everyone interested in the question of sick Nursing.

### ON THE NECESSITY OF LEGAL REGISTRATION FOR NURSES.

By MISS MOLLETT.

(Matron of the Chelsea Infirmary.)

MISS WOOD has thoroughly explained in her exhaustive speech, the very great need that exists, for putting some check on those women who use a title to which they can have no possible claim, but to deny their right to use which is at present impossible. She has pointed out most clearly, how those who have earned a right to use the title of Trained Nurse, should have that right guaranteed to them, should have some assurance that it carries with it a certain and well-defined meaning, that the words Trained Nurse should mean something tangible, and not be merely an ambiguous term conveying a different meaning to the mind of each listener.

When a man is stated to be a doctor, people know well enough what is meant; they are speaking of a man who has gained a legal right by a certain well-recognised and clearly understood course of training

to treat and prescribe for the sick. Should a man act as a medical practitioner without proper training and legal recognition, he is not allowed to usurp the title of registered medical men; and if the public employ his services, they do so with full knowledge, or they have the power of easily finding out, that they are not employing a recognised, skilled practitioner, and are treated at their own risk. If a woman calls herself a certificated governess, she means that she has obtained from those who should be competent to judge, a formal recognition of the fact that she has sufficient knowledge to teach others. If people *choose* to employ an uncertificated teacher, they can, of course, do so, but in that case they *know* that they are doing so; she does not call herself *certificated*; she does not lay claim to a title to which she must, if necessary, prove her right.

Every one knows what a certificated governess is; every one knows what a doctor or surgeon is; and that M.D. and F.R.C.S. *mean* something. If people like to have their teeth pulled out by the nearest blacksmith they can do so, but they know he is only a blacksmith, and they can have a qualified dentist if they choose. But the name "Trained Nurse" suggests nothing definite, even to the initiated; it does not suggest a distinct length of training; it does not mean that a woman has gone through any recognised course; it does not mean that she has had to nurse and observe certain diseases, that she can fulfil any requirements that are expected of a Trained Nurse. She may have been six weeks in a hospital, or six years; she may have passed examinations, and gone through a proper course of lectures, or she may not—but all the same, she can and does call herself a Trained Nurse.

Some of the public look upon a modern Sick Nurse as merely a modification of the Nurse of the old school, who gives herself infinitely greater airs, but is quite as objectionable and unskilled; others think her a kind of female doctor in disguise, who overrides the medical man's orders, rules the sick with a rod of iron, and has a gruesome routine of working, by which sickness is made as mechanical and formal as possible. Of the proper functions, position, knowledge and skill that are requisite to a properly trained Nurse, the majority have no idea—she is either in their eyes a modern Sairey Gamp, or a female doctor, or perhaps an impossible angel. Even in hospitals, the position she holds varies immensely; in some she is little better than a mere scrubber, in others she holds a proper position as a skilled attendant on the sick.

It is not my intention to define here what a really well-trained Nurse is. I should like just to mention that though I have very frequently met with Nurses—generally clever, half-trained, or wholly untrained women—who *presumed* too much, I never yet met that wonderful being, the Nurse who *knew* too much. The more a Nurse knows, the more helpful

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