

of education and culture, who is best fitted for the work, with her natural love and aptness, who gives up three or more years wholly and entirely to perfecting the skill which she will bring to bear upon carrying out intelligently the orders she knows how to receive. We have much to do in awakening ourselves, the general public, and, let me add, last, but not least, the medical profession also, to the need that exists for uniformity and organisation, and we shall find great difficulty in the apathy of the mass until we can answer to their satisfaction the cry which carries with it such a selfish tone, "What good will it do me?" Let us rather demand, "How can we best help others by this movement?" The more it is thought over and talked about, the more clearly will reasons present themselves answering the question if we will but keep the gain to ourselves equally balanced with the profit to others.

Let us put forward the dignity and advancement of our calling. Let us never be contented with what *has* been, but look on to what more can be done. Only a few years back the number of eligible nurses was limited; now we have to compete with ever-increasing classes, who graduate year by year from all kinds of schools and under all kinds of conditions. When we think that these things are drawbacks which will not grow less, we must see that uniformity and organisation are needed to maintain a just balance, and that nothing short of registration—that is, State registration—is going to accomplish the end in view, and as each State regulates its own public affairs, so will each State form its own organisation, demanding the right to take its own professional standing and to be protected from those who sail under false colours. At present a costume is accepted as an outward and visible sign of proficiency, no matter what lack of credentials exists. The family accepts the person who presents herself to care for their nearest and dearest, and many times, in the anxiety of the moment, no questions are asked, and, if the case goes favourably, all well and good, they are satisfied, and even if they should subsequently find out she was not all they expected, she was good enough, perhaps, to be employed again. But that is not enough for us. Let the doctor who engages her or the friend who recommends say fairly and squarely just what her status is, as given faithfully by herself, and let her not borrow the items of a costume to masquerade as a trained nurse. By all means let these women be employed where it is desirable; but the public must be educated to appreciate the difference, and the untrained assistant must take a distinct and separate level, as unskilled labour will do in the markets of the world. A State organisation with its well-considered constitution and by-laws places its members on a plane of equality that cannot be travelled by those who remain outside, and by rigidly maintaining among themselves the highest standard of proficiency, it will be but a question of time before the strength of its position will eloquently speak for itself, and if there be any truth in the adage that the best always comes to the front, and that there is always room at the top for the best, it will be found without doubt that the old order has passed away, and that when people have learned to know where the best can be found they will not be satisfied with inferior aspirants of doubtful antecedents who can produce no certification of competence or character, and it is to be hoped that the distinction will be so clear and well-

defined that we will no longer be judged side by side with those who are acknowledged to be untrained, or those who have even been summarily dismissed from their respective places of training. In all this we must be honest and true workers, labouring for the good of the many, with the future well before us, and the honour of our particular school and State writ large in our hearts; then we shall not fail in our endeavour to better our cause and raise the standard of the nursing profession to the highest point attainable.

FROM THE STATE OF ILLINOIS.

President: We will now hear from Illinois, Miss Pickhart.

Miss Pickhart read the following:—

Since Mrs. E. B. Hutchinson, President of the Illinois State Association, and I are members of the same association, I beg that she, being better informed, give an outline of the work attempted and accomplished in Illinois. However, I would like to ask every nurse present, whether organising or joining a State association, to have a copy of Mrs. Bedford Fenwick's most excellent paper at hand. I will repeat what Mrs. Fenwick tells us, that "the basis upon which the recognised membership is founded must be clear." Let this be well understood, for we must know *what* we want. Fairness to the average nurse and the ability to point out to the public the practical application of our efforts certainly must bring us support. We cannot adopt methods adopted by other professions, but I think if every step is given ample time, if the work is done by women who have a true appreciation of the ethical side of our work, we can see the possibility of a result. Mrs. Fenwick further tells us that "the weight of our nursing societies does not depend upon their numerical strength, but on the vital force and courage of their individual members." We must look for these in our own ranks, and when the standard has been defined we may hope to see our great wish fulfilled. May every woman interested in the education of nurses begin by instilling the probationer with a feeling of obligation which goes far beyond her hospital and personal duties, and the teaching of to-day will make better women, nurses more helpful members of society, and State registration possible.

The President then called on Mrs. Hutchinson—President of the Illinois State Association—whose able address we hope to give next week.

Invitations have been received during the week by the Hon. Secretary of the Society for State Registration of Nurses from the Women's Institute in Victoria Street, and also from the Lady Superintendent of a leading Scottish hospital, to speak on the question of State Registration of Nurses in the autumn; both invitations have been accepted. The Hon. Secretary intends to be in Scotland from the middle to the end of October, and will be grateful for opportunities to speak at gatherings of nurses, and to those interested in the question of their registration by the State.

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