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Editorial.

A FEW REGISTRATION BOGIES.

It is a well-known device in legal warfare when the defendant's case is weak for his solicitor either to abuse the plaintiff's attorney, or to draw red herrings across the track. These are apparently the methods adopted by the anti-Registration party, whose case, stripped of all the verbosity with which it has been obscured, has no substance.

We will enumerate a few of the Registration bogies with which an attempt is being made to scare the unwary.

Bogey 1. Registration will reduce all nurses, "good, bad, and indifferent," to a dead-level.—Precedent in the case of other professions has established the fact that this is not the result of Registration. It will require a minimum standard of attainment of all who assume to be registered nurses. Beyond this a nurse can constantly add to her qualifications, whether in experience in ward and hospital management, or in specialties which must increase her professional value. At present, even in the largest training-schools, practical experience is not provided for all the pupils in the various specialties which should form part of their equipment.

Bogey 2. All nurses are to be registered on their technical qualifications alone. Only these are considered.—This is not the case. Any intelligent board on which trained nurses have direct representation will, without doubt, lay great stress on the personal qualifications of candidates, and on their practical efficiency. The effect of giving prominence to these points would, no doubt, be to encourage the training-schools to keep a much more careful record of the personal qualities of probationers than is at present the case. Indeed, in many schools no systematic record of these points is at present kept at all. The nursing examiners on a Conjoint Board of Medical Practitioners and Nurses would themselves demand evidence of practical skill from candidates. At present the examinations upon which the certification

of the majority of nurses depends are conducted almost entirely by medical men, in theoretical knowledge alone, thereby accentuating the very evil which the anti-Registrationists assert would be created, instead of amended, by the appointment of a conjoint examining body.

Bogey 3. Another bogey advanced is that, by some extraordinary process unknown to science or common-sense, the mere fact of a nurse being registered—even should she have demonstrated during her three years' training her possession of every virtue in the calendar—will cause her immediate deterioration, so that by her conduct and incapacity she will show herself deficient in all the qualities of which she formerly gave evidence.

Bogey 4. A rumour which the anti-Registrationists are busily circulating, and which is calculated to alarm trained nurses, is that no nurse without a three years' certificate will be able to register. This is entirely contrary to the express provisions of the Bill. Thus Clause 15, under which provision is made for existing nurses, arranges for the registration within two years from the commencement of the Act (1) of any person who "holds a three years' certificate of training from a hospital approved by the Council; or (2) produces evidence of training satisfactory to the Council, and has been for at least three years in *bond-fide* practice as a nurse, and is of good character."

Bogey 5. The above provision also at once demolishes another bogey, namely, that every existing nurse, whether holding a three years' certificate or not, will be required to pass an examination. It is not intended or suggested that the Bill should be retrospective, and every reputable nurse can claim, and will have a right to, Registration, provided she presents credentials satisfactory to the Nursing Council.

Bogey 6. Another statement, widely circulated, is that unless a woman is registered she will be liable to imprisonment, or a fine, should she undertake the nursing of the sick.

Provision 24 of the Bill answers this statement conclusively:—

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