

obligation which they owe them; secondly, as citizens and, thirdly, because the direct representation of the public on any Board governing the nursing profession is of importance.

"The Report you have just heard has given you the present position of the Registration movement, and its supporters desire the appointment of a Select Committee of the House of Commons to inquire into the whole nursing question. It may be contended that the two propositions do not marry well, that there is no necessity for the appointment of such a Committee. This is not the case. Most Bills introduced into the House of Commons are pioneer expressions of opinion, and this one is an expression of principle also. I am sure that the ladies concerned in drafting the Bill will be ready to consider any alterations suggested in the Committee stage. The Select Committee which we are now seeking to set up will be a stage forward towards the accomplishment of our desire, which is the State Registration of Nurses for their own and the public protection. I have carefully read the Anti-Registration Manifesto, and I find that the main argument, which our opponents consider sufficient to knock down the whole case for Registration, is that personal qualities are not registrable. This is the root-idea underlying every single statement of the Manifesto. I ask you, supposing I were taken ill with typhoid fever, and you were interested in my recovery, if the choice lay between an unsympathetic and skilled nurse, and a sympathetic and unskilled woman, whose services you would secure? It is too ludicrous to be told you would rather have the incompetent woman.

"I am making no general indictment, but there are societies in our midst sending out women as nurses of the sick, the chief concern of which is their pecuniary profits, and the certificates which the nurses hold afford a guarantee worth about as much as that given by Mrs. Hooley on a certain recent occasion.

"I think all will be prepared to admit that in no case is the possession of tact more necessary than in members of the Diplomatic Service who have to conduct delicate negotiations with foreign countries, but it does not follow that members of the Service are chosen for their tact alone. Indeed, the entrance examination of this Service is one of the severest known.

"The main fallacy of the opposition is that, because we desire to register the qualifications of nurses no other consideration has weight with us. This is not the case, and I note with pleasure in the reply to the Anti-Registration Manifesto the following sentence:—"Matrons of hospitals in which nurses undergo training will have precisely the same opportunities of judging of the moral qualities of their nurses as they have under the present system, and

it is not apparent why that side of a nurse's equipment should receive less consideration under a system of Registration than it does at present." Of course not.

"If the public wants a nurse, it will in preference, when Registration is established, choose a Registered Nurse, but this will not dispense with inquiries which can be made in individual cases. How will the registration of nurses raise their status? I have in my hand a letter from Miss Haldane, who at the time of the South African war was asked, with Miss Stevenson, to select nurses for work in the Concentration Camps at a fortnight's notice. In some cases the Matrons to whom application was made for references had changed; some nurses had no certificates, and no doubt some applicants suffered real injustice because their claims could not be verified in time to permit of their being selected. Such a state of things is absurd, wrong, wicked, and the State should take note of it and provide a remedy.

"I hope and believe that very shortly after Whitsuntide the Select Committee which we are desirous of obtaining will be appointed. Everyone, therefore, should work to provide the Committee with the necessary evidence when the facts are investigated. I believe the Report of this Committee must have the effect of forwarding the Registration of Nurses, and thus of giving dignity and status to a body of women who perform splendid work, and to whom the public are under a debt of obligation."

Lady Helen Munro Ferguson, in seconding the resolution, said: "Mr. Tennant has dealt most ably with the opposition to Registration, but I should like to draw attention to an article in the *Nineteenth Century* by Miss Lückes, Matron of the London Hospital which may be regarded as the last word of the opposition, which is centred largely in Whitechapel. Miss Lückes holds that the public should always apply to the Matron of the hospital where a nurse received her training for a personal reference, but it is very unfair to nurses to expect them to depend for the whole of their professional careers on the good word of one Matron. Further, Matrons change and are removed by death, and this method is manifestly impossible. Again, can the Matrons of large institutions, with many responsibilities, attend to this point? Have they the leisure to act as registry offices, not only for the nurses whom they superintend, but for all nurses ever trained in the wards of the hospital? Such a system is absolutely impossible and impracticable.

"Surely, it must strike all who have read the article as surprising that the Matron of so important a training-school as the London Hospital should attach so little importance to technical training."

Lady Helen then advocated the appointment of

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