

will now be occupied by women who command the confidence and respect of their colleagues, and to whom they will be responsible for their policy and conduct of business, as against women appointed without their consent, and who would have been responsible to their own Committees alone. It also makes ten more members of the Board direct representatives by election, and brings the direct representatives of the Matrons and nurses up to fifteen, as against six in the original draft Synopsis of the Bill, thus changing immeasurably for the better the whole constitution of the governing body.

Clause (e) provided for "six fully-trained nurses to be elected by nurses on the State Register, resident in the respective areas represented; two to represent the Metropolitan area of London, two to represent the Provinces, one to represent Scotland, and one to represent Ireland."

Miss Alice Beatty said she considered the number of representatives allotted to the nurses quite inadequate. They had suffered in the past from not being able to get a hearing, and she considered that the number of nurse representatives on the Board should be double that of the doctors.

Mrs. Fenwick supported the demand for more direct representation for the nurses. Once registration was in force there would soon be 100,000 nurses whose interests would be involved, and the more direct representatives as against nominated members the better. Overwhelming nomination by academic bodies on to the General Medical Council had proved unsatisfactory to the large majority of medical practitioners; and the more progressive medical men were convinced that only by more direct representation on the General Council of Medical Education and Registration could a satisfactory system of government be obtained for the medical profession.

Mr. Langton opposed an increase of nurses' representatives, as it would make the Board unwieldy and unworkable. This view was supported by Mrs. Latter, and the original clause was put to the meeting and adopted.

With a few verbal alterations the other clauses were adopted, and authority was given to the Executive Committee to draft a Bill on the lines of the Synopsis, and the Chairman stated that it would be submitted for the approval of a general meeting of members before being introduced into the House of Commons.

There is still one provision in this Bill that it would be well to delete entirely. This is now Clause G of Section 8—that the Central Board shall have power "to inspect and register all private nursing homes."

This troublesome and expensive work is entirely foreign to the duties of a Board elected to provide for the Education and Registration of Trained Nurses. The inspection and disciplinary control of all the private nursing homes in London alone would be a most costly duty, and it is most unjust to suggest that registered nurses, by no means a well-paid class of women workers, should be called upon to pay for this branch of public service.

Consider the question for one moment. What at present come under the heading of "Nursing Homes"? 1. Legitimate private hospitals, those superintended by fully-qualified nurses. 2. Respectable institutions run by lay persons. 3. Lodging houses by the dozen, utilised largely as "Nursing Homes." 4. Homes where lying-in women are taken

in for legal, and others for illegal, purposes. 5. Respectable homes for massage and kindred treatments. 6. Houses of ill fame posing as Massage Homes.

The licensing, inspection, and supervision of Nursing Homes is a reform greatly needed, but the cost of such inspection and supervision must be charged to the rates or the public purse, as are other matters of this sort, and trained nurses will do well to resist at once being made financially responsible for this costly and thankless task, which would be for the benefit of the whole community, and for which the whole community must therefore contribute the cash.

E. G. F.

Why We Want State Registration.

The State Registration of Trained Nurses is a question which is of the highest importance to nurses, the medical profession, and the public, and, therefore, demands their earnest consideration; for the efficient nursing of the sick is of vital concern to all classes of the community.

The importance of the principle of Registration does not need demonstration. It has been proved in the case of other professions. The demand for it by trained nurses is confined to no one country or continent, proving that the need for it is world-wide.

The responsibilities which devolve on the trained nurse are great, and she can only be adequately prepared for them by an efficient and comprehensive education. At present no minimum standard of professional education is required of women undertaking the care of the sick. It is a matter of supreme importance that such a standard should be required before a woman is allowed to describe herself as trained, and, in this faith, to obtain employment as a skilled attendant on the sick.

The Registration of Nurses by Act of Parliament is the only means by which a general standard of education and a definite system of professional control can be obtained.

The endeavour of the Society for the State Registration of Trained Nurses to obtain the passage of a Bill providing for the Registration of Trained Nurses, vitally concerns the whole community.

NURSES.

It is of importance to Nurses because there is at present no recognised standard of education for a nurse, and no means of control of, or supervision over, the nursing profession. Consequently any woman inadequately trained, or without any professional training at all, may act and describe herself as a nurse, and by her want of skill, or personal unsuitability, may not only endanger the life of the patient, but can, and in many instances does, bring discredit upon the qualified members of the vocation.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)