

It is impossible to compare a profession, such as yours, with an ordinary business undertaking—*e.g.*, with a grocery business—and yet comparisons like these are more than invited by ignorant people, who put forward the silly pseudo-argument that we live in a free country and that everybody has the right to do as he pleases. You will scarcely believe that in a discussion about rigid State control of medical education it was possible to hear the remark that a State supervision of medical education was not necessary, because the blacksmith's education was not under State supervision. I assume only a temporary error of judgment prompted the remark.

If you do not like the quality of sugar in a grocery store, if your milk contains formalin, if the butter is not good, you change your grocer. The injury done to you may be a loss to your pocket-book, and at most I hope only a slight injury to your health—although sometimes serious results follow, as, *e.g.*, cases of blindness have been reported after using material containing wood-alcohol. The State is beginning, rightly, to look earnestly to the question of adulteration of food, and little doubt can exist that it will do so more and more in the future.

Can, in an individual case, a possible injury by the hands of professionals be avoided and remedied as easily as that done by a grocer? Certainly not. And why not? 1. Because the public, who may know the difference between good butter and bad butter, cannot, as a rule, know the difference between a well-trained and a badly-trained nurse.

2. Because even if after a while somebody might detect the inefficiency of a certain nurse a great deal of harm may already have been done which is irreparable.

3. Because an inefficient nurse works also harm in a way which, as a rule, is not sufficiently appreciated. If a disqualified person occupies a position, it works harm not only in one but in two ways. First, it is not able to do its duty properly, and further it prevents, at the same time, a qualified person taking charge.

So far as the advantage of State Registration to the nurses themselves is concerned, it appears plain that the same shows itself in several ways:—

1. From a moral,
2. From a scientific,
3. From a material point of view.

1. It is scarcely necessary to say that the unification of the profession which goes hand in hand with State Registration must be of great significance from a moral point of view. It is inspiring to belong to a profession which forms a unit and is respected, whereas it is discouraging to belong to a profession whose members are scattered here and there with no common interest and without that feeling of mutual help and encouragement which is so much needed in any profession.

In the relation to fellow nurses, to patients and others, differences of opinion may arise which cannot be decided by an individual alone because there exist few who are free from prejudice of one kind or another. By knowing that certain rules are agreed upon, the individual nurse feels more certain, in case questions should arise, necessitating some kind of a decision. If the decision is left to an uninterested judge, the odium of ill-will is removed, for the parties concerned, and a disagreement can be adjusted easily, thus freeing the mind from the sting of personal enmity.

2. From a scientific point of view, a great deal can be accomplished by State Registration. The State, as a responsible party, cannot license inferior nurses. It must look into the fitness of the applicant, into the preliminary education and the professional education proper. It must see to it that only well-equipped hospitals are allowed to train nurses; it must set a standard of preliminary education, allowing only those to enter a training-school who possess the necessary bodily equipment and that preparation of the moral and mental qualities which are indispensable for a proper understanding of the duties of a nurse. It will demand that the hospital to which a training-school is attached give a complete and thorough course of instruction and have ample material for practical training.

3. From a material point of view the State Registration will benefit the nurses more indirectly than directly. Considering the great number of individuals who devote themselves to the profession, it can scarcely be assumed that a higher general standard will lessen the number of nurses. The law of supply and demand will be in evidence also here. It will prevent, however, that the ranks of the profession become filled with uneducated, badly-trained individuals. The latter can work for a low remuneration, because they do not invest honest efforts and capital to reach that point of perfection which should imperatively be demanded from nurses. If an individual who wants to become a nurse sees before her the years of hard work and study, not free from danger and possible injury to her own person, then we must admit that the nurse should have a certain security that she can find such an amount of work afterwards which enables her to live decently, to be able to provide for herself, so that she can keep her body healthy, and enjoy those recreations and diversions which are so essential for the minds of all people whose body and soul are under a heavy strain.

We must always keep in mind that, although professionals, we are at the same time members of the community and, as such, are entitled to the rights which others enjoy. In other words, we are entitled to a remuneration according to our ability and services. All these and other points are familiar to you, and they show that the necessity for State Registration is obvious. This cannot be

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