

Others shall not be permitted to hold themselves out as trained nurses; and, while no one will be forbidden to employ any person, whether registered or unregistered, as a nurse, and it will not be forbidden to anyone, whether registered or unregistered, to care for the sick, the counterfeit shall not pass as the genuine—the unregistered shall not occupy the status of the registered. Others may claim to be just as good as trained nurses, but they shall not claim to be trained nurses, and such as are seeking for the genuine article will have no difficulty in finding it. Indeed, the article will hereafter be known by the name of "Registered Nurse" rather than "Trained Nurse." Nor is there anything unjust, unfair, or partial in this—anything that does not meet the approval of the highest tribunals of this country. If you will permit me, I will read to you what the Supreme Court of the United States has to say in regard to regulations of this kind:—

"It is undoubtedly the right of every citizen of the United States to follow any lawful calling, business, or profession he may choose, subject only to such restrictions as are imposed upon all persons of like age, sex, and condition. The right may in many respects be considered as a distinguishing feature of our republican institutions. Here all vocations are open to everyone on like conditions. All may be pursued as sources of livelihood, some requiring years of study and great learning for their successful prosecution. The interest, or, as it is sometimes termed, the estate acquired in them, that is, the right to continue their prosecution, is often of great value to the possessors, and cannot be arbitrarily taken from them, any more than their real or personal property can be thus taken. But there is no arbitrary deprivation of such right where its exercise is not permitted because of a failure to comply with conditions imposed by the State for the protection of society. The power of the State to provide for the general welfare of its people authorises it to prescribe all such regulations as, in its judgment, will secure or tend to secure them against the consequences of ignorance and incapacity as well as of deception and fraud. As one means to this end it has been the practice of different States, from time immemorial, to exact in many pursuits a certain degree of skill and learning upon which the community may confidently rely, their possession being generally ascertained upon an examination of parties by competent persons, or inferred from a certificate to them in the form of a diploma or licence from an institution established for instruction on the subjects, scientific and otherwise, with which such pursuits have to deal. The nature and extent of the qualifications required must depend primarily upon the judgment of the State as to their necessity. If they are appropriate to the calling or profession, and attainable by reasonable study or application, no objection to their validity

can be raised because of their stringency or difficulty. It is only when they have no relation to such calling or profession, or are unattainable by such reasonable study and application, that they can operate to deprive one of his right to pursue a lawful vocation."

Every well-informed person must recognise the important relation which skilful, intelligent nursing bears to the practice of medicine and surgery in these days of almost marvellous progress, and none are more ready to admit this than the most renowned physicians and surgeons. It is of the greatest consequence that there should be in the community a body of competent trained nurses, able to respond to every call that may be made upon them; and when they have given the requisite study and time to prepare themselves for this duty, it is but just that the State should establish some tribunal to whom they can demonstrate their fitness, and upon whose assurance the public may rely that they do possess the requisite qualifications, and that others be not permitted to claim them.

Why is it necessary to provide for State Registration? Is not the diploma of a training-school a sufficient guarantee of capacity and skill? No doubt yours are, but unfortunately all training-schools are not like those from which you have come. It is said that there are schools, happily not in our own State, where trained nurses are made to order in six weeks. If the training-schools do their work properly, their graduates will have little difficulty with the examination necessary to receive registration, but if they do not, their graduates should not receive it; and those who hereafter shall have to secure registration through examination after graduation may well submit to it cheerfully in anticipation of the benefits which will certainly follow.

Only the same protection for the public and for the profession has been sought in the case of the trained nurse as that which has long been enjoyed by the professions of law and medicine, and other callings, whose following by unskilful or incompetent persons is supposed to touch the public health or public weal; with one exception, that, whereas no one is permitted to practise law or medicine, or some other callings, unless duly licensed thereto, the trained nurses, with that modesty and fairness characteristic of their sex, have not asked that all unregistered persons shall not be permitted to nurse, but only that they shall not be allowed to do so as registered nurses.

If the lawyer and the public receive protection against the knave and the shyster—if the doctor and the public receive protection against the charlatan and the quack—if even the sanitary plumber and the public receive protection against the bungling upstart—why are not the public and the trained nurse equally entitled to protection against ignorance and incompetence?

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