

doctor of medicine there does not carry with it a license to practise medicine.

In the earlier days in America it was very important to secure a sufficient number of doctors to provide for the needs of the community, and therefore no obstacles were put in the way of persons desiring to follow this profession, however imperfectly. Every effort was necessary to secure enough doctors, so that when we endeavoured to have State Examining Boards to confer a licence to practise there existed large interests which were naturally opposed to any interference with the existing state of affairs. The lesson which you may possibly draw from this is that the longer you wait to secure State legislation the greater difficulty you will have; that it will be easier this year than it will be years ahead, so that the sooner you proceed in this matter the greater are the chances of success.

Another matter, of course, was the granting of the most liberal recognition of all existing rights to practise under the original law, and I take it that that will also be judiciously considered on your part. The great benefit of the law will be in the future. Be therefore liberal, I should say, in the recognition of those who are already engaged in the profession. Of course, none of those will be required to take the examination at all. Those who meet certain qualifications that you will decide upon will, of course, register if this law is secured, as trained nurses, without submitting to any examination. The examination will pertain only to those who enter the profession after the law is in effect. You are only endeavouring to secure for your profession what has already been secured for other professions. You are not asking, therefore, for anything that is novel or experimental, or the application of any new principles of legislation whatever. The conditions are a little different as regards nurses than as regards physicians, or pharmacists, or dentists, or lawyers, all of whose professions are now amply protected by law. It is not, for the present, and doubtless it never will be, considered judicious to prescribe that those who do not meet your qualifications shall be hindered from the practice of nursing. . . . You simply ask that some definite meaning shall be attached to the term trained and registered nurse. Now, if all training-schools in the country had high standards of education, similar periods of study and equal facilities for giving practical training, it might be questioned whether there was any urgent necessity for this registration of nurses. In the earlier days very likely such a need did not exist, but now the very fact that this movement has arisen and obtained in these three or four years such momentum indicates that there is need for making clear in what the qualifications of a trained nurse should really consist. You therefore do not ask for any-

thing more than that the term "registered nurse" shall carry with it a definite meaning, that meaning implying that those qualified to register have had a certain definite training.

The art of nursing is a profession that is of the highest rank. It is one eminently fitted for women, it is one that requires a long period of training, one that requires special qualifications in the way of education on the part of the nurse, and I may say that I consider, although I am not a practitioner of medicine, that there is no improvement in modern medicine which outranks in importance, in its value in the prevention and cure of disease, the introduction of the system of trained nurses. One can put his finger on great discoveries in medicine—the relation of bacteria, we will say, to the causation of disease, which is of the greatest interest in the progress of medicine—but so far as the treatment of disease is concerned the application of the system of trained nursing counts for as much, if not more than any scientific discovery in medicine. So important is it that it is the main factor in the treatment and management of a number of the important and prevalent diseases. The benefits, therefore, which will come from the passage of this law are in a measure to you as a body of trained nurses, but in a larger measure to the medical profession, and in still larger measure to the whole community, to the general public. Therefore, it seems to me that all the enlightened forces of society should be interested in the furtherance of this great movement on your part.

The great advantage of this legislation will be for you, as it has been for the medical profession, an elevation of the standards of education of the trained nurse. It will not be interfering with the practice of nursing. It will not drive out, I think, the incompetent and untrained nurse, but the lines will be more sharply drawn than now between the unskilled and untrained nurse and the trained nurse, and the community can know whether the person claiming to be a trained nurse really is a thoroughly trained nurse. It will have an effect, of course, upon the inferior training-schools, those which none of you here, I am sure, would for a moment vouch for; schools with only short terms. I understand that there are schools giving only two or three months' training, and graduating nurses at the end of that time; schools in small hospitals devoted to only one class or a few classes of disease. In that way it is impossible for a nurse to receive the sort of training which can be obtained only in a general hospital.

There will also be, as a result of this law, some line drawn between the recognised training-schools and those not recognised. . . . Just how you can have a list of the so-called recognised training-schools remains for you to consider. The law

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