

every probationer at the London Hospital goes to its preliminary school for theoretical teaching for six weeks, and she was examined on every subject, taught there, before she was admitted into the hospital. He explained that the probationers were paid £12 the first year, £20 the second, and £24 the third; that the Sisters received £30, rising to £40; that the private nurses received £30, rising by £5 a year to £55, and that they could retire after eighteen years' work for the hospital on a full pension of £55 a year for life. He then turned to Dr. Fenwick's evidence, and did not attempt to traverse any of the serious statements concerning the need for nursing reform, but most strongly objected to the answer that girls might be admitted into hospital for their training at eighteen, which he thought would be a cruel thing to do. The London Hospital, he said, admits them at twenty-three, but only as paying probationers. If they do not pay they have to be twenty-four, and he thought that was the earliest age. If they had to earn their living, he thought parents ought to get them something else to do between leaving school and the time they were twenty-four. He wished to emphasise the fact that Registration could not deal with the nurse's character, and that nothing would protect the public except reference to the hospital that trained her, for her character. He hoped that the King's Hospital Fund would require each hospital Matron to keep a register of its nurses. He objected to State Registration because it would be impossible to remove a nurse's name from the Register, however badly she behaved; for example, he knew a woman who was now going about and who was insane, or rather he would say "dotty," but if she were registered no one could remove her name from the Register because she was in that condition. Of course she was a danger to the public, and he admitted that, of course, at present no one could stop her nursing. He again argued that the Register would give a continuing certificate to the nurses upon it for all time, whereas a hospital certificate was dated and would show just when the hospital ceased to be responsible for a nurse; but in reply to the Committee he admitted that the Register would state the date which the hospital certificate was given, and would, therefore, give exactly the same information to the public as the certificate itself. He admitted that hospitals now got complaints about their nurses, but he argued that a Register could not remove such nurses any more than the hospitals could. Mr. Holland then proceeded to argue that one could not make Registration compulsory, and he thought it would be very difficult if a Nursing Act was passed to get the nurses to register. He stated that in America, where they had Registration, the nurses would not register; that the British Nurses' Association had not persuaded nurses to register with them; and that when the troubles arose in that Association and Mrs. Bedford Fenwick left it, she started another Association for Registration—the Chartered Nurses' Society—but the nurses would not register there, and if they wanted it why did not they join that body? He next asserted that if State Registration was started, the hospitals would start Registers of their own in opposition to it; that there are not enough trained nurses to meet the present demand for their services, and he felt quite sure that Registration would prevent nurses going into the profession. Finally, he was quite sure that poor nurses could not pay five guineas for examination and regis-

tration; and that they could not possibly travel about the country to be examined; so that Registration would exclude a great many nurses, some of whom went to the London Hospital so poor that they could not get their daily bread.

In reply to questions from the Committee, Mr. Holland considered that three years' training was quite unnecessary for nurses. They had sent nurses to the King and to the Queen who had not had three years' training. He further admitted that the London Hospital, which was proved at the time of the Lords Committee in 1890 to send out probationers from the wards to act as private nurses, still does so, and that they do not inform the public that they are sending them pupils who are learning their work.

At this point, the Matron of the London Hospital, Miss Lückes, suddenly interposed to state that probationers were only sent out of the hospital when they were specially asked for by the medical staff.

The Chairman of the Committee stated that Mr. Holland's evidence was so important that it would be well for the Committee to adjourn so that they could read his evidence in print before asking him any further questions on the matter.

On Tuesday, July 19th, the Committee held their fourth sitting. Dr. Norman Moore gave evidence at some length, to which we shall devote space next week, and Mr. Sydney Holland was recalled. He caused much surprise by stating that he did not at the last meeting say that the London Hospital sent out probationers as private nurses. The Parliamentary reporter took his words down to that effect, and he actually answered questions on the point put to him by members of the Committee. The mistake is therefore the more extraordinary.

Nurses at Buckingham Palace.

Since the Queen signified her willingness to present certificates of membership to those nurses who have joined the Royal National Pension Fund since 1901—about 3,000 in all—arrangements for the ceremony, which takes place in Buckingham Palace on Friday of this week, have been pushed forward and completed. Nothing like the whole number of policy-holders will be able to attend, as the duties of their profession always detain a considerable proportion, but something like 2,000 nurses may be expected to assemble at the Palace. Of these, however, a number will be policy-holders of a date antecedent to 1901 who have been unable for one reason or another to attend previous presentations. They will wear uniform and simply march past after the Queen has distributed the membership cards. Even with this deduction the Queen's afternoon will not be a light one, for she will hand personally to the nurses many hundreds of certificates; and, if she follows her own practice of 1901, will be standing during the whole time.

In order to shorten the ceremony as much as possible, the nurses are to be carefully instructed beforehand, and for this purpose will assemble at the Palace some two hours before the appearance of the Queen, which is timed for three o'clock.

An address to the Queen will be read before the presentations begin.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)