

to protesting against this outrageous scheme, which she considered a disgrace to the twentieth century. Under one of the rules proposed, a quorum of three could remove from the Register the name of any person to whom the Society saw fit to object. She hoped all present had got copies of the *BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING* for February 11th. The monstrous Memorandum which was published in that issue contained no less than 108 paragraphs. The seventh paragraph struck her particularly. It provided that "every member of the Society undertakes to contribute to the assets of the Society in the event of its being wound up or during the time he is a member, or within a year afterwards, for payment of the debts and liabilities of the Society contracted before the time at which he ceases to be a member." Anyone who knows what a Limited Liability Company is will understand what this means. Again these people might order Irish nurses over to London to be examined, and to receive their certificates. No references were made in the Memorandum to Ireland. Then, where did the money come from to start the scheme? The Society had no legal power, but the signatories were well-known gentlemen, headed by Lord Rothschild. She thought it might be assumed they did not know what they were doing, or how they were interfering with the work of nurses. Nurses who put themselves under the control of this Society would lose everything, and would simply be traders of a limited liability company.

Again, paragraph 102 evidently only took cognisance of those living in the City of London, for it provided that any notice required to be given by the Society should be advertised *once* in the London daily papers. What Irish nurses, asked Mrs. Treacy, saw the London daily papers? This provision at once excluded them from the scheme against which every self-respecting Irish nurse should protest.

Mrs. Treacy then read the following letter:—

My Lord,—As President of the Irish Nurses' Association, I am keenly interested in the Memorandum of the proposed "Society for Promoting the Higher Education and Training of Nurses," which appeared in *THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING* of February 11th, your name, with those of six others, forming the list of signatories.

Knowing your desire for the welfare of nurses in the past, I venture to ask if you are aware that for many years nurses have been working to procure State Examination and Registration? We have spent much time and money over the furtherance of this project, and believe we are now within measurable distance of attaining our desire.

The scheme which you have put forward would seem to us to try to place a barrier to our obtaining—in the near future—the legal status for which we have laboured so long; it also appears to ignore the just claims of nurses to govern their own affairs, and we most respectfully wish to state that in our opinion women who have trained as nurses are the people

qualified to administer such affairs, assisted by medical men and representatives of the public.

In the full belief that you have no wish to injure us by formulating such an obstructive scheme,—I beg to remain, my Lord, faithfully yours,

MARGARET HUXLEY,

President of the Irish Nurses' Association.

Mrs. Manning, Lady Superintendent of the National Dental Hospital, seconded the proposition that the letter should be sent to the signatories of the Memorandum. This was then put to the meeting and carried.

The Chairman, Miss Hampson, said she thought the financial and commercial importance of the Society might be more emphasised.

There were 80,000 nurses working at present in England. If each nurse subscribed £1 1s. that would mean a capital of over £80,000, and it was easy to understand that it would be worth while for these gentlemen to be in control of a Society which owned this capital. Then if 2,500 nurses in England finished their training each year, and subscribed £1 1s. for examination and £1 1s. for registration, that would bring in an income of £5,000 per annum. Who would despise that? Nurses must not forget that, though none of them were rich, collectively they were a power.

Miss McNeil proposed that a letter be sent to the Irish Members of Parliament, acquainting them with the aims of the proposed Society and the views of the Irish Nurses' Association thereon, and enclosing a copy of the letter to the seven signatories.

In seconding the Resolution, Miss Kelly said she thought it was only due to the Irish members to explain matters to them. She did not believe one of them would raise a little finger in support of the scheme if he thought it was going to injure Irish nurses. She was of opinion that all nurses should try to educate both the public and their legislators on nursing matters.

The Resolution having been carried, Miss Huxley said she would like to propose a vote of thanks to Miss Hampson for presiding in such an able and dignified manner. This was carried by acclamation, and the meeting then terminated.

At the Quarterly Court of Governors of the London Hospital, held on Wednesday last, Dr. Bedford Fenwick asked what steps were being taken by the hospital to oppose the dangerous scheme proposed by the Society for Promoting the Higher Education and Training of Nurses. The Hon. Sydney Holland replied that the Committee would oppose as strongly as possible the licence of the Board of Trade being granted to this self-constituted Society. News to the same effect reaches us from other hospitals. In fact, thanks to the publicity which this scheme has received through our columns, there is a rapidly growing and very powerful opposition being made to it in every part of the United Kingdom.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)