

and surgery that facilities should be given by Act of Parliament for the authoritative certification of competent trained nurses, who, when certificated, should be subject to common rules of discipline."

Miss Monk is also, perhaps, not aware that the British Medical Association at the largest meeting which that Association has ever held, in London in 1895, unanimously passed a resolution that "it is expedient that an Act of Parliament should as soon as possible be passed providing for the registration and education of medical, surgical, and obstetric nurses"; and that this opinion was practically reaffirmed by the members of that Association at the annual meeting held at Oxford last July. I venture to think that, in face of these most representative expressions of opinion on behalf of the medical profession in this country, the opponents of the Registration of Nurses would be well advised to leave the views of the medical profession out of their arguments against Registration.

I cannot, therefore, consider Miss Monk judicious in her assertion that "the public would be lulled into a false sense of security, and the doctors misled by believing that this Register would protect them from the incompetent and undesirable nurse which it could not do on account of the obvious difficulty of removing a name from the list when once registered without danger of litigation. This would, undoubtedly, prevent good and suitable women from entering the work of nursing."

Does the writer really believe that the medical practitioners of this country—who have some little knowledge in their own case of what Registration does and what it cannot do—are so very foolish that they would be "misled" into believing that a book published once a year, or a manuscript volume preserved at offices in London would "protect them from the incompetent and undesirable nurse"? Indeed, it is quite inconceivable how the book in question could lull the public into a sense of security, "false" or otherwise. It is difficult to understand how such a statement could have been gravely written and published.

Miss Monk must evidently be unaware of the fact that every session the General Medical Council strikes off from the Medical Register the names of practitioners who have brought discredit on themselves and on their profession, and that Parliament, when it establishes a Register of Nurses, must undoubtedly confer the same power of suspension or removal from the Nursing Register upon the body appointed by it to carry on the work. It goes without saying that a State-appointed body would never propose to remove a nurse's name from such a Register without grave cause; but it is equally inconceivable, and, in fact, impossible, that if the Council decided to do so, any nurse would be able to indulge in litigation at the expense of some hundreds or thousands of pounds to prevent the Council from so doing.

It is obvious, indeed, that an argument of so flimsy a character would not have been employed if any stronger contention had been obtainable. But, Miss Monk asserts that Registration of Nurses would fail to eliminate the undesirable women from the work. Once more, no proof is advanced to support that statement, but one may fairly argue that she is mistaken from the results which Registration has produced in the case of other professions. It has, for example, in the case of the medical profession, exercised two great effects. It has not only made it possible to eliminate the undesirable practitioners, but it has also exercised a most wholesome influence upon those who, without its deterrent effect, would, perhaps, have felt inclined to conduct themselves in an unprofessional manner. It is a fair argument, therefore, not only that the undesirable nurse under State Registration could, and doubtless would, be speedily disregistered, but also that the disciplinary powers of a General Nursing Council would exert a salutary control over the conduct of those nurses who might otherwise, as indeed they do at present, every day, cause danger to the public and discredit to their calling.

The admissions made by Miss Monk are, to my mind, even more striking than the weakness of the case which she advances against Registration. She admits that the present condition of affairs in the nursing world is "chaotic"; "that all nurses are classed together, wearing the same dress, obtaining the same fees, whatever be the length, the system, or source of their training"; that "this condition of things is much to be regretted" (!); "that the public and the medical profession alike have shown too great willingness to employ the partially-trained or untrained nurse." The obvious answer is: How are the public and the medical profession at present to distinguish the trained from the untrained, and is it not the duty of all who know the dangers now existing to find some reform as speedily as possible? Miss Monk does not "dispute that the public has the right to demand some guarantee that the women whom it employs as nurses are nurses in reality, not merely in name." Yet, so far as I know, the only reform which has been suggested is that which has worked so well in other professions—namely, Registration—and it is that reform which Miss Monk and her friends so strongly oppose. Yet she admits that "it is the duty of all thinking men and women to endeavour to arrive at some means by which this object can be obtained." Is it not the fact that for seventeen years Miss Monk and her friends have been opposing every effort which has been made for nursing reform outside the hospitals? What steps have they ever taken to fulfil what she now admits to be their "duty"?

Finally, Miss Monk suggests what she terms an alternative scheme:—"First, the licensing and registration of all surgical and medical homes and private nursing associations." I confess that the

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