

Progress of State Registration.

The meeting to hear the pros and cons of State Registration of Nurses, convened by the Kensington Branch of the Women's Liberal Unionist Association, and held by kind permission of Mrs. C. Tayler Ware, at 11, Phillimore Gardens, was chiefly interesting for the plucky and able manner in which Miss Hobbs, Secretary of the R.B.N.A., presented the nurses' point of view to the audience in advocating the organisation of the nursing profession by State authority. Miss Hobbs has the courage of her opinions.

Mr. Sydney Holland, Chairman of the London Hospital, put forward the employers' point of view, and, as a worker, we must be excused if we express the opinion that his arguments were singularly unconvincing—and profitless. All the old bogies were trotted out: that because London Hospital nurses, who do not necessarily have more than two years' training, nursed His Majesty the King after his serious operation by a London Hospital surgeon, *therefore*, a three years' training for nurses is not necessary. That nurses "with their existing low rates of pay" could not afford to pay a Registration fee. If not, why not, if they are justly paid by their employers? Many nurses at the London Hospital, during their third year's work on the private staff, bring in a net profit of at least £25 each to the coffers of the charity. That certain nurses will not register. We doubt it—yet as we are not asking for compulsory registration, all nurses can do as they choose. That "because they found an evil existing, it was not wise to rush at what they considered would be a remedy." We are glad at last to find Mr. Holland acknowledging "an evil." But considering that the question of State Registration has been discussed for the past thirty years—*ad nauseam* for the past twenty—surely, even in England, as we are still hammering away at it, "rush" is not an apt description of the plan of campaign. Indeed, Rip van Winkle himself could hardly profess to feel "out of it" should he appear upon the scene after a century of snoozing!

Miss Hobbs received very mild support from the members of the R.B.N.A. who were present, one lady making the cryptic remark that "time alone would show," but her straightforward outspoken advocacy was all the more refreshing and convincing.

THE NURSES' SOCIAL UNION.

In connection with this organisation interesting meetings were last week held at Bridgwater and Wells to discuss the advantages of a system of State Registration for nurses. The meeting at Bridgwater took place at the residence of Mrs. Foster Barham on November 13th. Mrs. R. Sanders (wife of the Conservative candidate for the Bridgwater Division of Somerset), occupying the chair. Many ladies were present. Amongst them Hon. Mrs. Stanley, Miss E. L. C. Eden, Miss Kitching, Matron of the Bridgwater Infirmary, Sister Vickery, and a number of nurses.

The meeting at Wells was held on December 15th. Mrs. Kennion (wife of the Bishop of Bath and Wells) opened the meeting with a few kind words of sympathy with its objects.

The speaker in both cases was Miss Bompas, Iverna Court, Kensington, who placed the matter with great clearness and moderation before her audience. Miss Bompas has a great power of seeing all sides of a question, which is very convincing. She said "that registration is needed (1) for the protection of the public who may at any time be dependent for their lives on the skill of a nurse; (2) that medical men may be sure of obtaining the assistance of a really competent nurse; (3) to raise the status of the nursing profession, which is injured by the ignorance or misconduct of unworthy members. It is therefore most desirable that public opinion should be aroused, that this important reform may not be indefinitely postponed."

Miss Bompas convinced her audience that much could be done to benefit the medical profession, nurses, and the public by a system of State Registration of nurses, and the following Resolution was passed unanimously:—

"That this meeting is of opinion that a system of State Registration of Nurses is desirable, and that it is advisable to get the Bills through Parliament without further delay."

CONGRATULATIONS.

The American *Dietetic and Hygienic Gazette* says:—"Our English friends are to be congratulated on the outcome of their long and patient campaign for the legalised Registration of Nurses. After fully sustaining the traditions of the House of Commons for delay and deliberation, the Select Committee has voted to recommend practically all the essential measures for which the nurses have contended. It only remains for Parliament to enact these recommendations into law and set the new system agoing."

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)