

Progress of State Registration.

The Journal of the Chelsea Infirmity Nurses' League has once more made its appearance and from its very interesting articles we reprint the able summary of the present position of the State Registration Movement by Lady Helen Munro Ferguson:—

Those who attentively follow the progress of this question will recognise that during the last few months much has happened to encourage supporters of State Registration. In the first place the representative annual meeting of the Medical Association passed a practically unanimous vote in favour of the principle of Registration; in the second place the anti-registrationists have abandoned their negative attitude, and instead of maintaining that everything is as it should be in the most perfect of nursing worlds, and that all forms of Registration would be valueless to nurses and a "positive danger" to the public, they have come forward with a scheme of their own, which they duly laid before the Lord President of the Council. The main feature of this scheme is the establishment of a Directory of Nurses, in which all nurses, irrespective of their qualifications, would have the right of being entered, with the one proviso that particulars of their training must be appended to their names. The advocates of this scheme suggest that if the public could read for instance that "Mary Smith" was trained for two years in "St. Matilda's Hospital, Market Town, —shire," they would be perfectly able to judge whether the said "Mary Smith" was a fit and proper person qualified to undertake the case for which she was required, and that to be on such a list would also satisfy all "Mary Smith's" legitimate desire for the reform of her profession. They further propose that a member of the Privy Council should have power to remove nurses from this Directory for criminal or professional misdemeanour.

It is obvious that this scheme will do little to promote those objects which Registrationists have at heart. It will do nothing to level up the standards of training in the different institutions of the country, nothing to place the well-trained provincial nurse on an equal footing with her London-trained sister; it will not enlighten the public as to the quality of the training given by the various hospitals, and it will not lessen the unfair competition between the partially-trained and the fully-trained nurse. It is also hardly conceivable that the profession will submit to the rule and absolute decree of a single Privy Councillor.

It is as well, therefore, that while welcoming this evidence of progress among anti-registrationists, we should still press for a complete scheme of Registration, which will secure the better organisation of the profession by the establishment of a representative governing body, to whom would be delegated the power of setting up a standard of training for fully-qualified nurses, and the duty of ascertaining that applicants for Registration have gone through the prescribed course, and possess the necessary qualifica-

tions; or, that on the passing of the Act, they were in *bonâ fide* practice, and in possession of satisfactory testimonials. We must also ask that the State should protect the Register by making it illegal for those, who have not been admitted to the Register by the Governing Council, to assume the title of "Registered Nurse."

The Society for State Registration is working as energetically as ever, and a petition is being promoted to ask the Prime Minister to make the Nurses' Bill a Government measure.

The Matrons' Council.

Miss Isla Stewart's paper on "The Twentieth Century Matron," read before the Matrons' Council last year, created such widespread interest in the nursing world that the Council proposes, at a meeting to be held at an early date, to discuss the Twentieth Century Probationer. It is hoped that the subject will be treated by a Matron, a Sister, and a Nurse.

"The Twentieth Century Matron" quoted from this JOURNAL, which is the official organ of the Matrons' Council, has been translated into German, French, Dutch, and Danish; it has also appeared in American nursing and medical journals, and in the professional Australasian and Canadian Press. Behold the widespread usefulness of the professional Press.

Miss Agnes Brennan, Hon. Member of the Matrons' Council, has been unanimously elected an Hon. Member of the Spanish-American War Nurses' Society. Miss Brennan during the war, greatly assisted in gaining for the nurses that official status which was of such importance in securing applications from the right kind of nurse, and in facilitating their work when appointed.

Our Prize Competitions.

Our readers will find on page 304 three prizes offered in connection with our Prize Competitions. We hope that all will study them and will consider whether they cannot compete for one of the three prizes.

Nursing sisters of Queen Alexandra Medical Nursing Society for India will in future be drawn from the Eastern Command as well as the Secunderabad Division, and will be detailed by name from this division. The term of service in Burmah will be two years. The establishment will remain at four as at present, and these ladies will also be eligible for hill stations on return to India.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)