

which gave rise to complaints, and seldom want of technical training. It would be a grievous injury, and great handicap to many who were doing good work for the sick, if they had a slur cast upon them because they were not on the Register. He was aware that a Select Committee of the House of Commons had passed a bare and abstract recommendation in favour of a system of registration, but they had not in their report attempted to outline the scheme which they recommended. He believed that the scheme now before the other House was not drafted when the Committee sat. (N.B.—The Committee sat in 1904 and 1905. A Registration Bill was introduced into the House of Commons on behalf of the Society for the State Registration of Trained Nurses by Dr. Farquaharson in 1904 and Mr. Munro Ferguson in 1905.) The opposition to the Bill had evidently been engineered from a common centre. Those who promoted the Directory Bill had done so with the genuine desire to place the noble profession of nursing on a better footing than it occupied at the present time.

#### LORD AMPHILL.

Lord Ampthill said he had no doubt that the intentions of his noble friend were disinterested, but he was espousing another losing cause in a spirit of knight errantry, and it was to be regretted that his Cobdenite doctrine of *laissez faire* extended so far that he would refuse to a great profession, and to the general public, that protection which has become the established principle of legislation not only in this country and the Colonies, but in many foreign countries. He claimed that the principle of State Registration for Nurses was approved by the General Medical Council, the British Medical Association, the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland, the International Council of Nurses, the Matrons' Council of Great Britain and Ireland, the Society for the State Registration of Trained Nurses, the Irish Nurses' Association, and its Ulster Branch, the Scottish Registration Committee, the Asylum Workers' Association, the Fever Nurses' Association, by numerous Leagues of Nurses, and such important Societies as the National Union of Women Workers, and the Women's Industrial Council. It had obtained the approval of a Select Committee of the House of Commons, and two Bills were now before that House dealing with the subject, which were approved by an immense weight of medical opinion. The promoters of these Bills were earnestly opposed to that of his noble friend, because they regarded it as deliberately, avowedly, and

wantonly hostile to the principle of State Registration which they had at heart. That opposition came from a small body of individuals, he might almost say from one individual. Their reasons for objecting to State Registration had never been made clear, chiefly, he thought, because they were afraid to put them to the test of a public discussion by those who would be mainly affected by legislation. His noble friend had not mentioned one medical or nursing association which was supporting him.

Lord Ampthill said that, though he was associated with hospital work, as Chairman of a county hospital and of the Colonial Nursing Association, he was not speaking as the mouthpiece of any association; but his intercourse with medical men and nurses had shown him the strong feeling there was in regard to the Directory Bill. He waited to see if anyone else would take action, but, as what is everyone's business is no one's business, and no one else came forward, he gave notice to oppose the second reading. In his view, the Bill was objectionable, both in manner and in matter.

It had always been the custom in regard to legislation in this country to consult the opinions of those most concerned before introducing a Bill, but that course had not been followed in the present case. The advocates of this Bill, finding themselves baffled by the Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons, had inveigled his noble friend to draw a red herring across the registration scent. The Bill was a blocking Bill, an anti-Registration Bill, and the opinion of neither doctors nor nurses had been sought or obtained. Lord Ampthill then showed that the objection of Lord Balfour, that it was impossible to register character, could be brought against the registration of the members of other professions in which it had already been effected. The object of registration was to guarantee professional efficiency. The Bill provided in no way for the maintenance of proper standards of training and conduct among nurses; that must be done by a Central Council, with statutory duties and powers, on which doctors and nurses were properly represented. It would not remedy the evils Lord Balfour admitted existed, would be misleading to the public, and useless to the nurses. He moved it be read a second time on that day six months.

#### LORD ASHBOURNE.

Lord Ashbourne said that the whole country was interested in seeing the nursing profession attain a contented and thoroughly recognised position. The nursing profession had de-

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