

ledge and skill are certainly requisite, in a nurse personal character and adaptability are of the first importance.

Lord Balfour then renewed his discreditable attack on the Matrons' Council, and said he hoped that if not in that House, then in another place, the fullest information concerning it would be forthcoming.

THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY made a most reactionary speech, maintaining throughout the right of the few in high places to dominate the bulk of the workers. He said that in a matter of this kind it was necessary to rely on expert evidence. When the proposal to register nurses was made years ago, the names produced of those for and against the proposition were closely scanned by him, and those of the Matrons of many of the London hospitals were against the proposal. His Grace considered that authority outweighed numbers in importance, and asked Lord Ampthill whether he would tell the House whether the leading physicians, and the Matrons of London hospitals and nursing institutions, who had expressed their opposition to the Bill in its early stages had changed their views against the desirability of Registration, and were prepared to say so. If they had he would bow to such a decision, but if Lord Ampthill could not give this assurance, his Grace deprecated going ahead in the teeth of authoritative opposition.

LORD AMPHILL said he had hoped that the Bill, having passed its second reading without a division, and having been twice through Committee, would have passed without comment.

He was extremely astonished at the remarks which had been made, all of which had been inspired from the same source, and especially at the criticisms of the Most Reverend Prelate. They were asked to give weight to the evidence of experts. He could not conceive where the Most Reverend Prelate had gone for his information, and could only suppose that the papers, which had no doubt reached him in common with other members of the House, had been thrown into the waste paper basket. The movement to obtain State Registration of Nurses had begun 20 years ago, and had had a steadily increasing measure of support. Any reasonable and strong opposition would have organised itself during that time, but as a fact all the organised nurses were in favour of the movement for registration. If that were not expert opinion he did not know what was.

The General Medical Council had passed a resolution in favour of legal status for nurses, the British Medical Association, numbering 21,000 medical practitioners, was as near unanimity as possible when a vote was taken

of delegates of its constituencies.

The Matrons' Council, the Society for State Registration of Trained Nurses, the Royal British Nurses' Association, the organised Nurses' Societies, the Irish Nurses' Association, and the Scottish Registration Committee, the Asylum Workers' Association, the National Union of Women Workers, and the Women's Industrial Council all supported the legal registration of nurses. Further, a Select Committee of the House of Commons which sat for two Sessions had reported in favour of Registration of Nurses. Their Lordships would remember what an immense commotion there was when Irish nurses were excluded from the Bill.

LORD AMPHILL then referred to the "worm-eaten" argument that "you cannot register character" which was becoming a catchword. It was proficiency which would be registered. Physical disability was easily recognisable, and the Council could deal with moral delinquency.

The value of the Register depended on the supervision exercised during the training period, on the enforcement of a national standard, and on the maintenance of discipline.

LORD AMPHILL said further that the attitude of some London hospital managers, who did not care for "State Interference," was intelligible. When factory legislation was under consideration, some employers might have thought they could do better for their employes than could be achieved by law. Legislation was not for the perfect few, but for the imperfect mass.

He dissented from the view of Lord Balfour of Burleigh that the Bill had been altered out of recognition. No principle had been sacrificed.

Replying to Lord Kinnaid, Lord Ampthill said he concluded the noble Lord referred to Cottage Nurses, but they were almost always certified midwives, and had their status under the Midwives' Act.

In reply to the Earl of Wemyss, he had good evidence that many nurses in the hospitals of London, including the London Hospital, were in favour of registration; but they dare not say so, because it would be as much as their places were worth.

In conclusion, Lord Ampthill thanked the Government for their sympathetic help and invaluable assistance in amending the Bill.

THE EARL OF CREWE, after ably summing up the case as regards the Bill, said that, as now amended, the balance of advantage was undoubtedly in its favour, and the Government were fully prepared to support the third reading.

The Bill was then read the third time, and passed.

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