

MEDICAL OPINION IN GLASGOW.

The following correspondence, reprinted from the *Glasgow Herald*, is illuminating, and as we all want to realise the real condition of affairs, will repay reading:—

"*The Glasgow Herald*," March 3rd, 1909.

STATE REGISTRATION OF NURSES.

Rosneath, February 27th.

SIR,—I shall be grateful if I may use your columns to ask some questions in reference to the meeting held this afternoon in the Merchants' House to consider the Bill for the State Registration of Nurses. I came up from the coast to attend the meeting in expectation of hearing discussion on the Bill, and at least finding out the mind of other trained nurses on the subject, for it concerns us—not doctors so much, not even matrons so much, except in so far as they have ascertained and represent the views of their own staff. Most of all it concerns us, the rank and file of trained nurses in Scotland, who want to safeguard our profession and protect and raise its status. At the meeting there was no discussion. Will some one tell us:—

(1) Since no real attempt was made at this meeting to find out the views of the large number of nurses present, when and where and how many meetings were held prior to it for that purpose? Meetings, we mean, where nurses undecided or ignorant in the matter could ask for, and get, information about the Bill, and particularly where the question of a separate registration for Scotland was discussed.

(2) Why was no discussion invited, or indeed permitted, at to-day's meeting on this important subject of a separate Bill for Scotland?

(3) Of all those on the platform supposed to be representative men and women in our interests, who was a prepared speaker on behalf of those against this separate Bill?

(4) Is it usual to carry an important resolution against a Bill at a meeting called to "consider" that Bill without any discussion, and in the hurried, one-sided, and high-handed manner adopted for carrying the resolution for a separate Bill for nurses in Scotland this afternoon?

And with reference to that separate Bill we would like to know:—

(1) How the fact of a woman being Scotch, and not English or Irish, in any way affects her qualifications as a nurse, or her status, and demands for her different rules and regulations than for her English fellow-worker?

(2) How the fact of a Committee governing from London in any possible way curtails its usefulness in Scotland?

(3) What is actually the meaning of "adequate representation" in this connection?

(4) Why cannot there be adequate representation of Scottish interests on the London Board of Management of Registration of Nurses, where Scottish interests may not be identical with English?

We are sure we are not alone in our disappointment or in our feeling that the resolution for a

separate Bill for Scotland was so proposed and carried through as to in no way represent the general wish of Scottish nurses. We had expected the matter would be put on a higher ground than party politics and national jealousy. On all sides, in all departments of our modern life to-day, there is the demand for unity, co-operation, combination. Would it not be the simpler and more enlightened policy in this matter for those of us who want State Registration—Scotch, English, Irish, Welsh, all over the kingdom—to unite shoulder to shoulder to gain our end and sink our lesser differences in the common cause?

This letter is written with a real wish for more knowledge on the subject.

I am, etc.,

FOR THE GOOD OF THE CAUSE.

"*The Glasgow Herald*," March 5th, 1909.

23, Woodside Place, Glasgow,
March 4th.

SIR,—In answer to the various questions put by your Rosneath correspondent in your issue of yesterday I would say:—

(1) As to meetings held prior to last Saturday's meeting, at which "nurses undecided or ignorant in the matter could ask for and get information about the Bill, and particularly where the question of a separate registration for Scotland was discussed," there were, so far as I am aware, none. In Glasgow there were some half-dozen preliminary meetings of a few medical men, and latterly with six or eight of our hospital Matrons in addition. At the very outset, *i.e.*, before any definite meetings were held, the cry of "Down with nurses' registration altogether" was mooted, but at the first regularly called meeting this proposal was quietly and judiciously dropped. It became now rather "Home Rule for Scotland" as to registration. I ceased attending after the fourth or fifth meeting.

(2) I imagine that discussion at Saturday's meeting was not invited because it was not wanted. As far as I, an onlooker, could judge, the intention was to stifle argument, to burke any attempt at a reasonable discussion of the matter.

(3) To the question regarding a platform speaker on the other side, the answer is simply—There was no one. Of the medical men who took part in inaugurating the systematic training of hospital nurses in the West of Scotland 30 years ago there are, I believe, only two of us surviving, and neither of us until we saw the advertisement in the *Herald* the previous day had heard a word of Saturday's meeting, much less had we been invited to the platform.

(4) This question is of a general character, and can be answered by many better than by me.

In the second group of questions No. 1 is not very clear and is unimportant.

(2) With regard to a body governing from London, I have heard it urged that the English members would predominate, and that the Scottish members would not attend. To this I would only say, why does the General Medical Council, the Governing Body for the registration of medical men, with its meetings in London succeed so well?

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