

of a nurse might be impaired. She might develop a chronic cough or become drowsy, hysterical, or "dotty," take to drink, drugs, and shop-lifting, and all the time she would be guaranteed by the register. The black sheep might, perhaps, be removed, but what about the piebald and grey ones? [What about them now?—Ed.] There was a remedy—"the Official Directory of Nurses"—and he endeavoured to resuscitate that dead and buried scheme. It was asked, he said, why the opposing Matrons did not come forward and discuss this question. They had not the time, and they ought not to have the time—(a sentiment warmly applauded by a Matron present, who nevertheless finds time to serve on the Army Nursing Board).

The speaker also referred to the list of the Central Hospital Council, of Chairmen of Hospitals, and Matrons opposed to Registration of nurses.

Mr. Holland has not one argument which appeals to reason and experience. We believe he thoroughly dislikes his brief, and in our opinion was the very last man who ever was intended to defend a reactionary policy. In his hospital work he has proved up to the hilt that progress and organisation are his *métier*, and the re-organisation of the London Hospital, apart from the nursing department, is the monumental evidence of his stupendous capacity for progress.

Miss Beatrice Kent said that the position in Mr. Holland's mind was apparently statutory registration *versus* character, but registrationists were just as keen about character as he was, indeed all the graces in the Christian Kalendar were required by a good nurse, but these were not incompatible with the attainment of adequate standards of nursing education. It was possible for nurses to be good women even if they did keep up with the times. The only way in which order could be brought out of chaos in the nursing world was by a Registration Act. The crux of the registration question was that it touched economic interests.

Sir Victor Horsley said he had attended the meeting because he wished to learn what Mr. Sydney Holland had in his mind in regard to registration of nurses. He knew he had the Official Directory Bill in his pocket. Sir Victor said that the views of the medical profession were clear on the question, as expressed on three separate occasions through the British Medical Association, so much so that he was now asked what was the good of again bringing up a question which had been conclusively settled. It was true that when a deputation was received by the Prime Minister, Mr. Asquith produced letters addressed to him privately by Harley Street consultants, but they had not the common courage to attend a meeting of the British Medical Association and oppose registration of nurses, nor had any association of medical men ever done so. There had been opposition to other reforms, but the only effect was to cause an expenditure of money before the day was won. The agitation for a rest day for the Metropolitan Police, in which he was interested, had cost £20,000, and the Registration of Nurses would probably cost as much. He concluded by saying that the nursing profession could only advance through the passing of a Registration Act. The medical profession found that out for themselves in 1858.

Dr. Bedford Fenwick pointed out that the arguments advanced by Mr. Sydney Holland had again and again been brought forward before tribunals capable of weighing and appraising their value, and had failed to influence the judgment subsequently expressed. A Select Committee of the House of Commons had in 1895 unanimously reported in favour of Registration. Previously the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council had held that the establishment of a Nurses' Register would be of much advantage to the public. In 1903 the House of Lords, after careful consideration of the Nurses' Registration Bill (introduced by Lord Amptill), passed it without a division having been taken at any stage. The British Medical Association, as they had heard, was practically unanimous. Everyone was agreed as to the importance of character, but when a Register of *Nurses* was proposed, technical efficiency had to be considered.

Mr. Holland did not seem to realise that the Register would not give a nurse her cases, and it would be to her own interest if she wanted work to keep up to date. Certificates once given could not be withdrawn; they could also be stolen or forged, but the entry of a nurse's name in the Register would be unquestioned testimony to her professional qualifications.

Lastly, Dr. Fenwick pointed out that in spite of Mr. Holland's opposition, the movement for the Registration of Nurses had steadily increased in force.

Miss E. C. Laurence, Matron of the Chelsea Hospital for Women, said that in her experience Registration in Cape Colony was a failure, and very few nurses registered.

[Nurses in Cape Colony were first registered in 1891, under the Medical and Pharmacy Act, when it was not realised that the professions of medicine and nursing, though interdependent, are diverse, and the medical faculty have never co-operated with matrons and nurses, and thus secured their expert advice and help to make the scheme a success. At the same time it must be remembered that Natal and the Transvaal have followed the example of Cape Colony in regard to Registration, from which it would not appear that the opinion in South Africa is generally unfavourable regarding the effect of the Act.]

Miss Laurence said she personally was in favour of Registration. It might not be so very essential in London, but in the country hospitals the training of the nurses often depended absolutely on the efficiency of individual matrons. She thought there should be annual revision of the register.

Mrs. Bedford Fenwick said she considered Mr. Holland's remarks concerning the constitution of the Registration Council were misleading. As such she was not in favour of the training schools being represented. It was their function to train and not to form the governing body of the nursing profession, which should be absolutely independent. Mr. Holland said there was only provision for one matron and that of a lunatic asylum, on the Council, but provision was made for eight direct representatives of the nurses, and they could—and no doubt would—elect matrons, women whom they could trust to look after their interests. All classes

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