

In conclusion, she urged the necessity for thoroughness, saying that after forty years' experience she would like to begin again.

DISCUSSION.

Miss V. Thurstan, Matron of the Spezia Hospital, Italy, said she thought it might be wise to consider the cause of the opposition to State Registration, in which some believed so absolutely. Was it not the rather grudging spirit shown in the recognition of work performed, that grudging spirit which was a relic of the dark ages when every bit of knowledge was grudged and attributed to alchemists, wizards and magicians. Two things had helped to overcome that, the introduction of printing, and the discovery of new countries, which had given a wider outlook and overcome the opposition to the people having knowledge.

The same grudging spirit was apparent still in the lack of official approval of nurses' work. What would pierce the thick hides of our legislators was more than she could say, but nurses must combine and work together. There was the spirit of inertia to contend with amongst those who had got their own place in the sun. There was also timidity. The movement was not popular in high places, but nurses must be courageous. If they had not had a very good professional education themselves let them work for it for others and give the younger ones a chance. It was want of co-operation which prevented nurses from getting what they wanted.

The Hon. Albinia Brodrick said she, as a nurse, looked at this matter from the point of view of the public. It was asked what difference would registration of nurses make? It would make just this difference to the public—that they would have some guarantee that what they were getting and paying for was a decent article. At present it was like buying a pig in a poke. The public did not know much about it. She did not approve of what the United Irishwomen were doing in sending among the poor people untrained nurses. It was cheating the poor, and blocking legislation for better workers. She was aware that a southern hospital sent out nurses after fifteen months' training to nurse rich and poor alike. She resented that, for the sake of the sick poor among whom she lived. She stood there to demand registration for nurses, which should give to the sick poor something that was really good and not something that was shoddy. Nurses for the poor should be first-rate, not untrained women doing the work, and wearing the uniform, of nurses. She did not see why anybody should pay to be murdered.

Miss Creighton said that the need of registration of nurses in India was as urgent as it was at home. She further urged that thoroughly qualified nurses should be sent to India as district nurses. As health visitors and workers in the houses of the people they could stamp out plague. The Government had failed, but women's work could do it.

Mrs. Haslam, the veteran Hon. Secretary of the Irish Women's Suffrage and Local Government Association, said that as the oldest woman present, and one who had the greatest admiration for the

profession of nursing, she was keenly interested in the Nurses' Registration Bill. It must be got through, and all nurses should unite with that object for registration was badly needed. She asked whether the opposition came from male doctors.

Miss Beatrice Kent said that in connection with the question of State Registration for Nurses she never liked to lose the opportunity of drawing attention to the fact that *THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING*, the nurses' professional organ, had been the one paper which had voiced the views of nurses on the registration question, and brought it to its present position in the sphere of practical politics. The *JOURNAL* was the nurses' best friend, and all should realise this, and give it the support it deserved.

Miss E. M. Cunningham, Warden of Trinity Hall, Dublin, said that as a teacher she was very strongly in favour of registration, and she believed that the United Irishwomen were also in favour. What the Society did at present was to supply midwives to the poor, and they added a little general training because they thought that a little was better than nothing.

Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, replying to Mrs. Haslam's question, said that all the medical support the nurses had received from the medical profession had been given by men. The medical women had been peculiarly apathetic on the question of nurses' registration, and so far had done nothing to help them. She appealed to them to consider the question, and to give it their support.

Medical opposition came practically from the members of the honorary staffs of hospitals, whose committees were in opposition; this individual and interested opposition did not amount to much in comparison with the united demand of the thousands of independent medical practitioners who had repeatedly expressed themselves by resolution in favour of registration through the British Medical Association, the self-governing Association of the medical profession numbering some 26,000 practitioners.

Referring to the difference of opinion as to the standard of training sanctioned by the United Irishwomen, Mrs. Fenwick pointed out that midwifery and trained nursing were two distinct professions—although, if trained nurses also possessed a midwifery qualification, it was an ideal standard for those working amongst the poor. Midwives had their own legal status, and they should keep carefully to their own work for which they were educated, and not assume to be trained nurses which they were not. It might be considered expedient by some nursing associations to give them an elementary smattering of nursing knowledge, and represent them as nurses; personally she hated expediency.

Trained nurses were asking for just laws for the good government of their profession; and the public should recognise and support their legitimate and conscientious demand.

The vote on the Resolution was then taken, and passed enthusiastically, with but two dissentients; and was declared carried by the Chairman.

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