

Therefore an examination by experts both theoretical and practical which if successfully passed would distinguish one from the other is necessary, this examination should secure that one wishing to practice as a trained private nurse must know at any rate the minimum amount which will enable her to be a help to the medical man and an efficient nurse to her patient. For the sake of smaller hospitals such an examination is desirable as it would raise the standard of education where now unless the Matron is a keen educationalist it is apt to be far too slack. Our opponents say that moral character is *more* necessary than knowledge, and we say it is *equally* necessary and would safeguard both by requiring a certificate of moral character before admitting the applicant to enter for the examination.

2ndly, State Registration is required by medical men; one of the leaders in this town spoke strongly before the Select Committee of the House of Commons of the necessity of having some guarantee of the efficiency of Nurses. He had suffered from the great discrepancy in the quantity and quality of the training of Nurses. He stated that he believed a State-authorized Central Council should be appointed to define and carry out a minimum standard of training and examination. Such a scheme would improve the status of nurses and keep a higher class of women in the work,—he added that three years at least should be the length of training as no amount of cleverness could make up for lack of experience, and experience can only be gained by time. These views are I imagine much the same as those which have induced the representative medical society in the United Kingdom numbering some 26,000 members to vote almost solidly for State Registration.

3rdly, The public as a whole do not think or care particularly about any technical details but they do demand to have what they pay for,—a highly skilled and competent trained Nurse and that, they think can only be secured in the same way as in other professions by definite training, and for a definite time which should end in an examination in order to ascertain whether that aim has been attained. The most moral man would not be justified neither would he be allowed to undertake the navigation of a ship or the command of a regiment without training and knowledge, nor is the most moral of women justified in undertaking the care of the lives of others without training and knowledge, but in the present chaotic condition of affairs this is done far oftener than the public guesses. Another great point to my mind and I suppose to the mind of all who are proud of their profession is that those who are a real disgrace to us could then be deprived of their certificates whereas now, they are their private property, and Nurses who have been in prison for other reasons than political can come out and on the strength of their hospital certificates get work at once. *Why* are we not to have what we demand? namely, State protection for ourselves, a State

guarantee for medical men and the public that we are fit and proper persons to exercise our calling? We want protection for ourselves from the untrained, the immoral, the fraudulent persons who now invade the work. We want to have a uniform standard of efficiency to which all must attain before working as private nurses. We want Central Boards of Examiners who are free from any suspicion of favouritism and we want power to eject those who lower the high character of a nurse's work, and we want protection for our uniform. The arguments against giving us what we ask are chiefly drawn from the conditions of large hospitals but it is not realised that more nurses are trained in small provincial hospitals than in London. These small hospitals must exist for the sake of the poor in their neighbourhood and it is only just that Nurses trained in them should be fairly equipped for their after work as private Nurses and able to take their stand with their (perhaps) more fortunate sisters. Nor is it realised that the demand for Nurses is so great that it is impossible to supply it from the large hospitals alone, and are medical men and the public to be deprived of a guarantee of efficiency because the large hospitals feel that their training is sufficient guarantee? Again is it not a proof that State Registration is good for a profession or calling or trade, that every day more bodies of men are applying for it and getting it and when they have got it are acknowledging the benefits they obtain from it. Why should we whose training is hard, whose work is anxious and responsible, not be allowed to have it? What harm shall we do to others if we have the opportunity of proving that we are women capable of doing honest and true work and that we really are what we claim to be—trained Nurses?

Therefore my friends and above all my fellow-workers in every way do your best to obtain what many of us have worked for, for nearly a quarter of a century—State Registration for trained nurses.

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### POOR LAW INFIRMARY MATRONS' ASSOCIATION.

A Meeting of the Poor Law Infirmary Matrons' Association was held by kind invitation of Miss Masters at the North Evington Infirmary, Leicester, on July 31st. Several members came from London, also from different parts of the country. After lunch a short business meeting, at which Miss Barton presided, was held in the committee room, where Mr. Gibson, the Chairman of the Board of Guardians, in a courteous speech kindly welcomed the matrons. After the meeting a tour was made of this new interesting and very up-to-date Infirmary, tea was served out of doors as the weather was fine. Altogether a very interesting and enjoyable afternoon was spent.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)