

and poetry which she desired that they would study, "if only," she pleaded, "for fifteen minutes a day"; and, like Lord Haldane addressing the students of Edinburgh University, she pleaded: "*Take a wide outlook on life. Nursing was,*" she said, "in its highest aspects, essentially a religious work, a vocation more than a profession. The nurse's opportunities for good were boundless, and through it all she must bring to humanity comfort and consolation; she must be a true daughter of consolation.

The office of Chairman was ably filled by Miss Puxley, Secretary to the Ranyard Nurses' Association. In her closing remarks she referred with pleasure to the reference made to Agnes Jones, because the Association was founded (in 1868) mainly as a memorial to her by her great friend, Mrs. Ranyard.

### PROGRESS OF STATE REGISTRATION.

The Council of the British Medical Association have accepted a recommendation from the Medico-Political Committee advising the Representative Body to re-affirm its opinion that the State Registration of nurses is desirable.

#### IN NEW SOUTH WALES.

The Nurses' Registration Bill for New South Wales, introduced by Dr. Mackellar, came up for its second reading in the Legislative Assembly on 16th September, Mr. Beeby moving that this Bill be now read a second time. A full report of the Debate is published in *The Australasian Nurses' Journal*.

The Nurses of the State are again doomed to disappointment as the Debate was adjourned, and the last session of the present Parliament has now come to an end, so that with the new Parliament the process will have to begin again. Nevertheless, they may take heart of grace, for, with the lever of the Parliamentary vote in their hands the nurses have power sooner or later to secure such legislation as their conscience demands. Moreover, the number of nurses is comparatively small and through their well organized professional society—the Australasian Trained Nurses Association—they are able to enforce standards and discipline, so that they have not to contend with the situation in this country where the disorganization and lack of discipline have created a situation which is exceedingly dangerous to the sick public, and which is ruining the reputation of professional nursing.

#### THE LAW TIMES ON "NURSES' REGISTRATION."

The following opinion, which appeared in the *Law Times*, on the 15th inst., will, we hope,

encourage a Government of lawyers to push forward the long-delayed reform of Nurses' Registration:—

#### NURSES' REGISTRATION.

It would seem as though in this country that Parliament has not as yet adequately appreciated the need for some legislation on this subject. It is nearly ten years ago since Dr. Farquharson introduced in the Commons a Bill for the State Registration of Trained Nurses, which Bill, without considerable modification, has been since then annually presented by the Right Hon. R. C. Munro-Ferguson. In the Lords an attempt was made in 1908 by Lord Ampthill, but his Bill got no further than its third reading in that House. That these efforts are not the mere outcome of some individual faddists is shown by the fact that in 1905 a Select Committee of the Commons, having taken evidence during two sessions, agreed that it was very desirable that a central body should be set up by the State to keep a register of nurses. There is at present no adequate standard of nursing education. We have to trust largely to the splendid spirit which, as a rule, animates the nurses themselves; and to the traditions inspired by hospital experience. In the case of the doctors, a general medical council prescribes the standard of medical education, but in the case of the nurses, on whose efficiency and judgment so many lives depend, there is no analogous nursing council with powers to raise and maintain the standard to the level desired by the best authorities. It is rather notable that hospital boards are largely under male management; and the knowledge and influence of women, which would be so specially appropriate in connection with matters affecting nursing, are not adequately employed.

#### THE NEED.

It must be obvious that in other departments great efforts are being made to increase the efficiency of general education. In connection with no special and technical subject, there is no guarantee to the public that a nurse is really efficient. The formation of a central authority would remove the fear always entertained by the relatives of a sick person at some crisis. Registration would imply a definite curriculum and experience; and it would hall-mark a woman as a person of skill who has undergone the supervision and discipline analogous to that to which the medical man has been subjected. Having regard to the serious accusations which appear from time to time in the Press, it would be possible under a scheme of registration to put to the test the truth of statements which occasion so much alarm. A nursing council could, after inquiry, ensure that a nurse unjustifiably condemned should not have her career thereby imperilled; whilst substantial and proved charges could be brought home with adequate severity. At present, when once a certificate is obtained, a nurse cannot be deprived of it, however bad a character she may be shown to possess. It is quite time that a system which

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