

was passed unanimously at the meeting of the International Council of Nurses, in Cologne, in August, 1912—the nurses of nine countries supporting the demand for Registration.

#### DEMAND FOR FREE SPEECH.

A request made by a Sister at St. Bartholomew's Hospital to the Matron, for permission to use a room in the Nurses' Home for a meeting at which Nurses' Registration might be considered was not acceded to; referred by her to the Committee, it was subsequently announced that by their orders no such meeting was to be held in the hospital for the future; this was considered so serious an interference with the liberty of the subject, as the Nurses' Registration Bill had been before Parliament for ten years, that a special meeting of the Society was held in London, in January, 1913, at which a resolution of protest was passed unanimously, calling upon the Governors of St. Bartholomew's Hospital to expunge from the minutes of the institution, the record of a decision, upon the part of the committee, as injurious to the reputation and interests of the charity, as it is ungenerous towards its nursing staff. Copies of the resolution were subsequently sent to the governors of the hospital, and otherwise widely distributed.

#### THE MISUSE OF NURSES' UNIFORM.

In March, Dr. Chapple, M.P., presided at a meeting, held to protest against the misuse of Nurses' Uniform, at which a resolution was unanimously adopted, protesting emphatically against the grave injury suffered by the Nursing Profession as a whole, in the estimation of the public, through the exploitation of their professional uniform by persons who have no right to wear it, and who do so for commercial and also for criminal purposes; thus associating fully-trained nurses in the public mind with unskilled persons assuming to be skilled, and with persons of immoral character, and urging on the Prime Minister the claims of the Nurses' Registration Bill.

#### KEEN DISAPPOINTMENT.

The Executive Committee had also passed a resolution expressing its keen disappointment that the Prime Minister in his reply to the Deputation, was unable to accede to its request for facilities in the House of Commons for the Nurses' Registration Bill, and pointing out that "trained nurses have worked continuously and constitutionally to obtain legal status for the last twenty-five years, and that for ten years Bills for their registration have been before the House of Commons, and inviting the earnest consideration of His Majesty's Government to the disabilities under which the trained nurses of the United Kingdom suffer. Thus the Society had approached the Prime Minister and his Cabinet by resolution four times during the year. Two of the aforesaid resolutions have also been sent to every Member of Parliament.

#### PROGRESS IN BRITISH DOMINIONS AND THE UNITED STATES.

The Report notified the passing of Registration Bills in Canada, South Africa, and the United States of America, and the opinion of the German Nurses' Association that the introduction of a State Examination has been of salutary effect on both the quantity and the quality of applicants in nursing, and attributes the fact that a superior type of woman has entered the nursing profession to the introduction of State Registration of Nursing.

#### IN CONCLUSION.

The Report concluded:—"We desire to emphasise the fact that the movement for the registration of trained nurses, initiated by nurses, and promoted principally by the medical and nursing professions, was founded, and has been consistently supported in the interest of the community. It is natural that doctors and nurses should take a prominent part in the movement as none know so well the danger, the unnecessary suffering, and the loss of life to which the public are subjected, owing to the lack of any legal minimum standard of education for trained nurses, by which they can have a means of determining the qualifications of women who care for them in sickness, and nurses who realise this would be failing in their public duty if, at whatever cost to themselves, they did not insist upon the necessity for adequate proofs of knowledge and skill for those entrusted with this responsible duty.

In promoting this reform for the benefit of the community, the benefit of the nursing profession will also be furthered. It is a fundamental principle that the interests of the individual cannot be ignored without prejudice to those of the community as a whole, and in no instance is this more strikingly exemplified than in the delay to grant to the trained nurses of the United Kingdom that legal status which, as indispensable servants of the public, they have so justly earned."

#### ELECTION OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

The Executive Committee was then re-elected and it was agreed to invite Miss E. B. Harradine, the newly-elected President of the Royal South Hants Hospital Nurses' League, to accept a seat on the Committee.

#### SIR VICTOR HORSLEY'S ADDRESS.

The Chairman said it was quite superfluous to introduce Sir Victor Horsley to a meeting of nurses, especially to members of a society enlivened by a professional conscience. It was a great pleasure to welcome him and a great privilege that he had consented to address them.

Sir Victor Horsley, who expressed his pleasure in addressing an audience of nurses so enlightened, said that he did not propose to speak for long as the meeting was favoured by the attendance of the two members of Parliament who had been foremost in promoting the Nurses Registration Bill, Mr. Munro-Ferguson and Dr. Chapple. It

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)