

minimum standard of efficiency should be fixed. In a word they desired system, and organised efficiency, versus the policy (still beloved of many), of leaving the nurse to muddle along and gain her knowledge through her mistakes. Nursing, as a career for women, had grown up very quickly. The days of the splendid enthusiasm of the pioneers were bound to pass, and then, very quickly the need for organisation was felt, and was felt still, for the lack of it had an injurious effect on nursing in many ways.

Miss Rogers claimed that a Nursing Council would be a recognised and competent authority, whose business it would be to enquire into the quality of the training, given in the various hospitals, and to level up those which were behind in their methods. She hoped it would be in their power also to give grants of money in aid of education, for lack of money was one of the most serious difficulties a Matron had to face who strove to get higher education for her nurses.

The speaker further pointed out that the position of the trained nurse was far from satisfactory; she was too often the victim of most unfair competition, some of which was actually fraudulent.

We who believed in State Registration looked forward confidently to the day when there would be a Central Nursing Council, composed of experts, able to give advice and to speak with authority on nursing questions. This would do more than anything else to remedy the abuses and confusions from which we now suffered, and the mere fact of better organisation would help to raise the professional and ethical standard among nurses, because they would feel that they were not mere units, but members of an honourable profession, on whose fair fame no action of theirs must bring discredit or disgrace.

RESOLUTION.

The Vice-Chancellor then moved:—

“That in view of the grave injury at present caused to Public Health, and to Nursing, by the absence of a Statutory Register of qualified Nurses, this Conference of the National Council of Trained Nurses of Great Britain and Ireland respectfully urges upon the Government to give facilities for the Second Reading of the Nurses' Registration Bill introduced into the House of Commons by Dr. Chapple, the First Reading of which was carried by a majority of 228 on March 3rd of this year.”

Mrs. George Cadbury said that speaking as representing the point of view of the public, and of the possible patient, she had pleasure in seconding the resolution which had been spoken to so ably. To attain Nurses' Registration it was necessary to convince the public, as it was only through the public that Parliament would be convinced of the necessity for placing the Bill on the Statute Book. Public opinion was growing, and on March 3rd the Nurses' Registration Bill passed its First Reading in the House of Commons with a majority of 228, composed of all Parties in the House.

The Registration Bill would inflict no hardship on less qualified nurses, other useful workers would fall into place and continue their work, but, if patients required a really qualified nurse they would ask for one who was registered.

The health of the poor was their greatest asset and the State was endeavouring in many ways to conserve it—skilled nursing reduced the duration of sickness.

If nursing had been a men's profession, registration would have been in force long ago, as men realized the need for legal status.

DISCUSSION.

Miss Richmond, Matron of the Hospital for Women, Sparkhill, opened the discussion, saying that as the Matron of a special hospital she felt strongly the need for registration. She mentioned that many years ago, before beginning her training she had found on a book stall a little buff-coloured paper which inspired her with many ideals, and which she had continued to take throughout her nursing career. It was the *Nursing Record*, now THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING. She advocated reciprocity in training facilities between general and special hospitals. It was not fair that a girl who had spent three years in a special hospital, should have to give four more in a General Hospital. We must all work to attain our ideal, a fully trained profession, which would get all it could in order that it might give all it could for the patients.

Mr. Lionel Stretton, Surgeon to the General Infirmary, Kidderminster, said that he felt impelled to come to support the resolution. His chief reason for supporting the resolution was the debt he owed to trained nurses. He was confident that the surgery of the present day would be impossible without them, and anything he could say or do to help them was a great delight.

He considered that the Nursing Schools should be open to inspection. Nurses must be properly housed, properly fed, and the period of study regulated. If Registration were in force it would do away with the anomaly of women who had had inferior training being elected to the highest posts in the nursing world. He was confident that a Nurses' Registration Act would soon be placed on the Statute Book, not only for our own benefit but for the benefit of the great Empire we were privileged to serve.

Miss C. A. Barling, another Matron of a special hospital, supported the motion, and Mrs. Bedford Fenwick spoke of the great progress made internationally as well as nationally—forty-eight countries and states having gained State Registration of Nurses since 1891. She urged all nurses to write to the Members of Parliament for the constituency in which they resided, and ask them to support the Nurses' Registration Bill now before Parliament, and to get their male relatives and friends to do the same.

The Resolution was carried unanimously, with enthusiasm.

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