

STATE REGISTRATION.

The following Petition was presented to the Prime Minister on Monday by Dr. Chapple, M.P., on behalf of the Central Committee for State Registration of Nurses.

PETITION TO THE PRIME MINISTER.

The Central Committee for the State Registration of Nurses.

President: THE RIGHT HON. THE LORD AMPHILL, G.C.I.E., G.C.S.I.

NURSES' REGISTRATION.

Memorial

PRAYING FOR FACILITIES FOR THE PASSING OF THE BILL.

To The Right Hon. H. H. ASQUITH, M.P.,
Prime Minister, First Lord of the Treasury, &c.

THE HUMBLE MEMORIAL OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE FOR THE STATE REGISTRATION OF NURSES

SHEWETH as follows:—

1. Your Memorialists are Delegates elected as a Committee by the following bodies:—

THE BRITISH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION.

THE MATRONS' COUNCIL OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

THE ROYAL BRITISH NURSES' ASSOCIATION.

THE SOCIETY FOR THE STATE REGISTRATION OF TRAINED NURSES.

THE FEVER NURSES' ASSOCIATION.

THE ASSOCIATION FOR PROMOTING THE REGISTRATION OF NURSES IN SCOTLAND.

THE SCOTTISH NURSES' ASSOCIATION.

THE IRISH NURSES' ASSOCIATION.

2. Your Memorialists, on the ground that legislation is urgently required in the interests of the whole system of voluntary and municipal hospitals, and also of the public who largely employ trained nurses, humbly pray that facilities may be afforded for the passage into law this Session of the Nurses' Registration Bill, which has been introduced into and is now pending in the House of Commons.

3. Your Memorialists would point out that at the present time there is no definite standard of training for hospital nurses. Each training school fixes its own standard, and although in many instances the certificate granted on the completion of training is a guarantee that the latter has been efficient, there is good reason to believe that exceptions are also numerous.

The pending Bill provides for the standardisation of training.

Moreover, while State Registration will not prejudice the economic position of women who are engaged in nursing but do not pretend to be trained, one of its chief objects is to prevent untrained and partly trained women from representing themselves to the public as fully trained nurses. It is common knowledge that such misrepresentation is widespread; the public pay for what they do not receive when health and even life may be at stake. Again, as recent incidents prove, there are those who pose as trained nurses for the basest purposes, and so degrade the uniform and lower the prestige of an honourable calling.

The above conditions, aided by others, are now bringing about a result foreseen by many interested in the supply of trained nurses. Many women, among them those best qualified, are deterred from entering the nursing profession in England, which is in imminent danger of losing the esteem of the public. Your Memorialists have recently addressed an enquiry to Hospitals, Infirmaries, and Nursing Associations, and they have evidence which proves not only that candidates for training have fallen steadily in number during the last few years, but that their educational and social qualifications are depreciating.

Meanwhile, the demand for efficiently trained nurses is growing rapidly; among the factors in this demand are advances in medicine and surgery with a related extension in the field of nurses' work, the campaign against tuberculosis, the medical inspection and treatment of school children, the Insurance Act, and, in general, recent measures for the improvement of public health. It is a demand which the supply of trained nurses is already insufficient to meet, and untrained and partially trained persons are being employed, even by public bodies, to deal with this serious state of things. The suggestion has been made that the dearth of nurses will prove temporary, but those in touch with all the facts cannot accept this view; so long as the circumstances remain as at present, no increment of suitable candidates for training is to be expected, but rather a progressive deficit, while, on the other hand, it is certain that both for public and private work a much larger body of trained nurses than is now available will soon be required. Your Memorialists view the situation with grave apprehension. They believe, however, that State Registration, by defining and safeguarding the status of trained nurses, will lessen the reluctance of women generally, and especially

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