

It was for the benefit of the health of the nation that such things should be stopped as soon as possible.

Dr. Callaghan said they saw all sorts of servant maids and nurse maids in nurses' uniform.

Mr. Garstang said unanimity already existed on this question, except for the party led by Lord Knutsford, of the London Hospital, and they would never get their adhesion.

He had no serious objection to the rider. He thought the repeated vote of the Representative Body might be taken as expressing the views of the majority of the profession on the subject.

The rider was carried by a large majority.

INSUFFICIENTLY TRAINED NURSES.

Mr. C. E. S. Flemming (Trowbridge) moved "That this meeting views with concern the increasing number of insufficiently trained nurses, and instructs the Council to call upon the Government and the other authorities concerned to take steps to remedy this evil." He drew attention to the increasingly large number of improperly qualified nurses practising in this country. There was also a rapidly increasing number of district nurses acting as health visitors and tuberculosis nurses who were not properly qualified. That state of affairs was a great danger to the profession. The authorities, such as county councils, were very much to blame, and they should be called upon to do something to improve the situation. Local authorities could do a great deal in the way of hurrying up legislation to ensure the proper qualification of nurses.

Dr. J. Singleton Darling (Portadown and West Down), said there was a danger of lowering the nursing service all over the country because the authorities could not get the thousands of nurses which were required under the Insurance Act.

The rider was approved.

The more active the members of the British Medical Association are in pushing forward this important reform the better.

THE ST. GEORGE'S VETO.

When we have had occasion to comment upon the fact reported to us on various occasions that Matrons and nurses are not free agents in many hospitals and institutions, where liberty of conscience is concerned, the anti-registration press has denied the soft impeachment with unconvincing bluster. How about the following paragraph which appeared in the *Daily Herald* on July 24th?

FETTERS FOR NURSING PROFESSION. COMMITTEE PROSCRIBES INDIVIDUAL LIBERTY.

Has a Hospital Committee the right, to bar members of the staff from appearing on any platform? This question was raised in the appointment as Matron to St. George's Hospital of Miss Elsie Cooper, at present Assistant Matron at the Royal Free.

The committee demanded the political views of the applicants, a course open to serious objection. It means that the Matron must bury herself entirely in her immediate work, irrespective of its associated problems, and is a cowardly method of obtaining an "understanding" on matters outside the scope of the appointment.

We believe Miss Cooper is a whole-hearted supporter of State Registration for Nurses, but obviously she cannot now join the profession in petitioning Parliament.

The Superintendent told the *Daily Herald* representative that the questions were put *merely* to ensure that the Matron has no interests outside the hospital. He considered that the question of State Registration would not be objected to. Yet this very question was raised by an applicant, and the committee would not countenance their Matron supporting such a scheme.

The main issue, however, is quite definite. The Matron is not allowed full personal liberty. She is not to exercise her own discretion in private matters, but to adopt the ideas of the committee.

The remedy—a Union.

As several readers sent us the above cutting, and asked us to comment upon it, we visited St. George's Hospital on Monday afternoon, but unfortunately found the Medical Superintendent out (let us hope he was not attending either a political or professional meeting!). We had the pleasure, however, of being courteously received by the Secretary, who corroborated the facts as published. We asked him if the domestic staff, male and female, were subjected to the same invidious restrictions, upon appointment, as the Chief Nursing Official, and found they were not!

We have since received a letter marked "Private" from the Deputy Treasurer, who as Chairman of the Selection Committee, apparently sees nothing reprehensible in the authorities of a public institution denying personal responsibility of thought, and action, to the lady entrusted by them with the power to superintend and advise the nursing staff, and who is presumably by personal influence and sympathy with their individual characteristics, to maintain a high standard of conduct and contentment amongst them. We have addressed a reply to this gentleman asking him to be good enough to lay it before the House Committee of St. George's Hospital. Our suggestion is that the Committee shall take an early opportunity of removing their veto, in so far as it affects the inalienable right of the officers and servants of a public institution, to hold what political and professional views their conscience and capacity may dictate, so that they may be responsible for their own personal conduct and actions. To deny to the Matron of a hospital such personal responsibility, is in our opinion calculated to lower the prestige of the whole nursing department.

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