

in reading. I think, if I may say so, that the fact of Mr. Stanley being neutral is the reason he can do so much for nurses in the matter which he is kindly championing. He is not, as it may appear to you from your letter, altogether unconnected with nurses and the nursing world. He is interested in several general hospitals, and as Chairman of the Joint War Committee, he is in touch with military hospitals and nursing boards, besides which we have a nursing staff of 2,000, and between six and eight hundred war hospitals in England alone, which he has directly or indirectly equipped with nursing and other personnel.

Personally, I think it is useless to waste our energies, like children, crying for what we cannot obtain in the meanwhile, namely, State Registration. The scheme which we have before us will, I think, meet all requirements, and at the same time allows scope for extension. The most important matter at the moment is unity, which, of course, means strength, and if a sufficiently strong board could be organised there is little doubt that later on we shall be able to secure recognition, which, I quite agree with you, is necessary for the well-being of the profession.

The question of consulting the individual nurse in the present scheme would, of course, come later. Speaking for my own staff, it is what they require. [Have they been consulted?—ED.] Every scheme of the kind must have a backing, and what more suitable one can we give nurses than that of the Matrons of their training schools, and others who are responsible for teaching and are in a position to influence those who must make the first move? I am sure it is with this motive at heart that the Matrons of the large training schools are considering together to make the present move forward. All agree that something must be done to deal adequately with the present conditions brought about principally by the War. The nurses themselves, I am sure, will gratefully join hands with us when they come home to ordinary work again.

Yours faithfully,

To Miss Lee.

S. A. SWIFT.

[There is only one ray of light in this letter—that at last, after a quarter of a century, the Matrons of certain large training schools have realised their responsibility to the profession at large, and are at last convinced how injurious both to the nurses' interests and also those of the sick public has been the attitude of obstruction of their Committees. Mr. Stanley may be "neutral," whatever that may mean—so far he has only heard the views of the anti-registration group—but he has for years been an Hon. Officer of the Middlesex Hospital, the Committee of which has persistently opposed the conscientious demands of the registrationists for nursing reform, and which is represented on the Central Hospital Council for London, which has never done anything else, as far as we know, but oppose our professional aspirations. We women who have worked for an Act of Parliament to regulate the

qualifications of our profession, do not consider that we are wasting our energies, nor are we to be classed by those who have expended no energy upon this just demand, as children crying for the moon! We differ strongly in opinion from Miss Swift that the scheme promoted by her and the anti-registration Matrons "will meet all requirements." Anyway, it does not meet the requirements of those progressive members of the profession who claim that the governing body of the nursing profession shall be an *elected* and therefore an independent body, authorised by Act of Parliament conferring legal status upon trained nurses in the United Kingdom—as our Dominions', and American Parliaments have conferred it upon trained nurses in other parts of the world. That Matrons, however well-meaning, are to meet privately and draw up schemes for our management, without even informing certificated nurses what they propose to do, proves that these ladies are still sadly out of touch with the democratic feeling of the age. We certainly agree that it is high time the just grievances of trained nurses should receive consideration, but we must have no shoddy substitute for the legal status it is the duty of the State to confer, and which Parliament would long ago have granted had it not been for the opposition of the reactionary Chairmen and Consultants of the hospitals with which these ladies are associated. Unity let us have by all means, but like Irish reciprocity it must not be "all on one side." The first step to a right solution of this question is a conference without prejudice between those who stand for legal status and democratic control of the nursing profession and those who stand for a voluntary system governed by a nominated Board. If the latter party are not prepared to confer with their colleagues and the rank and file then the hope of unity is vain.—ED.]

We have received a large number of letters from trained nurses emphasising the opinions expressed in the letter published, and not one in favour of side tracking State Registration, as the Nursing College Scheme is calculated to do. We regret we have not space to insert them this week. Letters received from "An Orderly" and Mr. H. B. will be published next week, as in this issue it has been imperative in the interests of the nursing profession to devote much space to the State Registration question.

OUR PRIZE COMPETITIONS.

February 5th.—What is the difference in the nature and action of a vaccine, and an anti-toxin serum? What is a common dose of diphtheria anti-toxin? How would you prepare the skin for the injection?

February 12th.—What accidents to patients most often occur in the wards? How would you prevent them?

February 19th.—Describe (a) the symptoms and (b) the nursing of cerebro-spinal fever.

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