

been introduced into the House of Commons and passed without a division by the House of Lords. Thus we desire government of the profession by an elected not a nominated body.

I think it is supremely unfortunate that the Nursing College Scheme should be launched from the Offices of the Joint War Committee—the Committee who have been largely responsible for the present state of affairs, who have magnified the work of the untrained, even at the cost of the trained workers, and whose untrained members are awarded a "Nursing Certificate" after a few lectures and trivial examinations. We wish to be free of social patronage and interference and to stand on our own feet as members of a highly skilled body of women workers. This does not prevent our suffering without protest this "dilution" of our labour by the introduction of probationers into the Military Hospitals during the present crisis. There is much work which can be done by untrained persons working under skilled supervision. It cannot, however, be too clearly understood that these probationers are not receiving training in nursing. They are war workers and to be treated with honour for the service they can do for their country, however humble that service may be, just as women munition workers or tram conductors. At the end of four years of such work as these probationers are doing they would be less trained and less experienced than a first year probationer in a Civil Hospital. There is not the necessary material for training, and there must be no opening of a back door to the Nursing Profession.

In the provinces, especially in the large industrial centres of the Midlands and North there is, I think, less interference with the trained workers, and more sympathy with their desire for organisation and self-government than is to be found among the Governors of London Hospitals. At any rate, although London may be regarded as the centre of everything desirable, provincial nurses would certainly not consent to be governed by a body elected by London Hospital Chairmen and Matrons, nor would the nurses of Scotland and Ireland.

Voluntary schemes have been tried and failed. Would this voluntary scheme impede or assist registration? It would impede it because there is no freedom of action under it for the Nursing Profession. Further, it is admittedly a makeshift, and a makeshift once accepted generally goes on.

Miss Musson concluded by reiterating the clause in the resolution, "This meeting emphatically supports the Bill for the State Registration of Trained Nurses, and desires to urge upon the Government and upon Parliament the pressing necessity which exists for passing such a Bill."

The Resolution was seconded by Miss M. Heather-Bigg, President of the Matrons' Council of Great Britain and Ireland, who said:

Madam President and Ladies,—Though I am not a public speaker, though I never in my life before addressed a public meeting, I cannot be silent this afternoon.

As President of the Matrons' Council of Great Britain and Ireland, I am impelled by the present crisis in the Nursing profession to protest against any Voluntary College of Nursing governed by a nominated committee. In the name of the Matrons' Council of Great Britain and Ireland, I emphatically demand the legal recognition of trained nurses by Act of Parliament.

The moment has arisen when we must leave the schoolroom of nursing. We admit we may have learnt in the past under the guidance of Chairmen or Governors of hospital, the need of the community for qualified and trained women to tend the sick. To-day we are of full age, and, like all adults, we have the right to demand self-government, to demand that the nurse training schools shall have a uniform curriculum of training. We demand that an independent College of Examination shall be established to furnish conclusive proof to the public that we have been through a recognised course of training, and that we possess the necessary knowledge to merit a Diploma of Proficiency, and to be registered as a "Trained Nurse."

Not only do we claim the legal recognition of our profession, we claim also the right to elect our own representatives on the General Council for the Registration of Nurses in the United Kingdom.

We resolutely refuse to have thrust upon us by the Committees of the hospitals we work in their idea of how much or how little of educational teaching shall be given to the probationers in these hospitals.

We want nurses to have the same advantages that medical students enjoy. Every hospital with a medical school has to give the student adequate instruction to qualify him to pass the examination entitling him to be registered as a medical practitioner.

The Lady Superintendents, Matrons, Sisters and trained nurses of many of our well recognised training schools for nurses, both in London and the Provinces, are clamouring for the same meed of justice for those women they are educating to become "trained nurses." We need now, more than ever, to offer vigorous opposition to the proposed scheme of a Voluntary College of Nursing, we refuse to content ourselves with any other recognition of our status than that of State Registration.

We must decline absolutely to have thrust upon us women who, although they have organised War Hospitals and tended the sick during this war period, are yet below the standard of training demanded of a really trained nurse. This standard calls for not less than three or four years of continuous work in the wards of a general hospital.

I therefore second the Resolution, and ask all present this afternoon to strengthen our hands by voting solidly for it.

The Chairman then said, "We have heard the views of two distinguished Matrons. I now call upon Miss Beatrice Kent, a trained and travelled nurse with great experience, to support the Resolution."

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