

The College, if successful will ultimately become a large central Examining Board for Nurses, and other hospital workers, will keep a Register of Nurses, and will be free to move in whatever way may seem to be the best line of advance.

DISCUSSION.

The Chairman then invited discussion upon any points in connection with the scheme now before the meeting.

MISS BEATRICE KENT, representing the Society for the State Registration of Trained Nurses, which was first called upon, said that the movement for the State Registration of Nurses was a time-honoured one which had been in progress for nearly thirty years, entailing a large expenditure of time, energy, and money on the part of its promoters, but they had set their hands to the plough and would not turn back. That would not be British. The movement had a very strong backing.

In 1905 a Select Committee of the House of Commons presented a unanimous report to Parliament in favour of the State Registration of Nurses.

In 1906 the Lord President of the Council declared it a matter of national importance.

In 1908 a Nurses' Registration Bill was passed by the House of Lords supported by the Government.

In 1910 the Central Committee for State Registration of Nurses was formed, composed of the representatives of eight influential medical and nursing societies in the three kingdoms, all large and representative bodies which agreed to give it their whole-hearted support, and when the Bill was next introduced into the House of Commons it had the backing of all these societies.

In 1914, the last time the Bill was introduced, a division was challenged, the result being a majority of 228 in its favour. She thought she had said enough to demonstrate that energy, time and money had been spent in promoting the movement, and that it was strongly supported by the eight societies affiliated in the Central Committee, namely, 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, and the Irish Nurses' Association.

MR. COMYNS BERKELEY, representing the Royal British Nurses' Association, said he was sorry to be unable to say what the Association would do in regard to the scheme, as it had not yet come before it officially, and as yet the Chairman's draft letter had only been laid before the Council, who felt they must know more of the scheme before they were capable of expressing an opinion. They therefore welcomed the opportunity afforded by the invitation to attend the present meeting, but until they had further details of the scheme were unable to discuss it.

The R.B.N.A. had for years been one of the strongest advocates of State Registration, and had united with other societies having the same object. The Bill in which they were interested contained a clause providing for the uniform training and final examination of nurses, and its object was to obtain State Registration. The objects outlined by the Chairman appeared to be the same as those for which the R.B.N.A. had been fighting for years. When, therefore, he brought the further details of the scheme before his Association he thought it would have their sympathetic attention.

The Chairman then called on a representative of the Army Medical Department, but no one responded.

In response to a similar request for the views of the representative of the Department of the Medical Director General of the Navy, DR. STEWART said he had been asked to attend to gain information. He did not wish to say more at the present time.

MISS SIDNEY BROWNE, representing the Territorial Force Nursing Service, said she would prefer not to make any comments on the scheme at this stage. She was sure that the large number of members of the Territorial Force Nursing Service whom she represented would give every attention to the scheme. She was very glad to attend to hear further details as she was much interested in it. She would be very glad to do anything to help on this cause. She might say she also represented Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service.

MRS. PORTER, representing the Irish Nurses' Association, said she had been directed by the Association to bring before the meeting the resolution passed by it at a recent meeting. Mrs. Porter was beginning to read the Resolution when the Chairman said he need not trouble her to do so as it had already been published. Mrs. Porter agreed that most of those present had probably already read it.

The Resolution was as follows :—

"That this Meeting of the Members of the Irish Nurses' Association desire to reassert their strongly held opinion that compulsory examination, and registration by the State, is the only form of organization suitable to their needs, and believe that any voluntary scheme such as suggested by the Hon. Arthur Stanley would be prejudicial to their interests."

MRS. BEDFORD FENWICK, President and Representative of the National Council of Trained Nurses of Great Britain and Ireland, said she wished to put herself in order by handing in the Resolutions passed at a meeting of that Council held in London on February 12th, which she accordingly did.

The representatives present were there to obtain information. She therefore asked for the names of the Committee, and of Mr. Stanley's advisers who had drafted the Memorandum read by Miss Haughton, which she regretted was not before them in print. The Central Committee for State

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)