

in Council for the grant of a Royal Charter, in which application they were successful. The Royal British Nurses' Association thus possesses wide powers for the organization of nursing education, and has instituted an examination, and grants a Diploma in Nursing, but, as an effort not having the force of an Act of Parliament behind it, this has not met with widespread popular support.

If this is the case with an examination instituted by an Association having the prestige conferred by a Royal Charter, a Voluntary Scheme, instituted by a Society incorporated under the Board of Trade, will certainly not satisfy trained nurses who understand the benefit of legal status.

The second application to the Board of Trade was made in 1905 by the late Lord Rothschild, and other hospital governors for the incorporation without the word "Limited" of "The Society for Promoting the Higher Education and Training of Nurses."

The application was widely opposed, and it was pointed out that a Select Committee of the House of Commons was then enquiring into the expediency of the Registration of Nurses.

Ultimately the promoters requested that the consideration of their application should be deferred "until the Bills now before Parliament for the Registration of Nurses have been disposed of."

That request having been granted, and the Select Committee having reported unanimously in favour of the Registration of Nurses under State authority, it appears somewhat anomalous that application for the incorporation of the advocates of a similar scheme, promoted by some of the same persons, should be made to the Board of Trade, while the Nurses' Registration Bill merely awaits an opportunity for a Second Reading in the House of Commons to be effectively disposed of.

It is stated in the Circular Letter that the agitation in favour of the Registration of Trained Nurses, and others of a similar nature, have failed to attain the object sought.

We may point out that the object sought has not been gained mainly because of the opposition which comprises some of those who are now promoting the Voluntary College Scheme.

Reference is also made, in the Circular Letter under consideration, to the present unsatisfactory condition of affairs owing to the lack of organization in the nursing profession.

This lack of organization, and consequent lack of discipline, is no new thing arising out of conditions which are the outcome of the war, though they have been intensified by these conditions.

The problem of the organization of nursing is one which confronts not this country alone but all countries where skilled nursing is practised, and in this relation the method adopted by the nurses in our own Colonies is of special importance, since the maintenance of good feeling and reciprocal relations with our Dominions beyond the Seas is not only of professional, but of Imperial, importance.

The Registration of Trained Nurses is now in force in Cape Colony, Natal, the Transvaal, and the Orange River Colony in South Africa; in New Zealand; in the provinces of Ontario and Manitoba in Canada; in the State of Queensland, Australia; in the Bombay Presidency in India; in 42 of the 48 States of the American Union, and throughout the German Empire.

The movement initiated in this country over a quarter of a century ago has thus been found to meet so universal a need that it has spread round the world in this time. The well-organised nurses of the Commonwealth of Australia are within measurable distance of obtaining their legal registration, and we are of opinion that only through such a system, giving adequate powers of self-government to the recognised members of the nursing profession in the United Kingdom, will it be efficiently organised for its own needs, or for maintaining professional relations with our Dominions and with other countries.

At present those qualified and registered nurses who have legal status in their own Colonies and Dominions who desire to work in the United Kingdom, find that there is no recognition of any sort of their title of "Registered Nurse," and that they are legally classed in this country as domestic servants.

Conversely, nurses trained in the United Kingdom who emigrate to our Dominions where State Registration of Trained Nurses is in force find that they have no professional status, and further, that if they wish for recognition as trained and skilled workers they must pass the registration tests imposed in the Dominion concerned.

These disabilities would be abolished if a system of State Registration were in force in this country, when reciprocity of recognition would at once be established.

It should be emphasised that wherever systems of State Registration of Nurses are in force there is a consensus of opinion as to its immense benefit as a lever in raising both educational and ethical standards. Information on these points is incorporated in both Parliamentary and educational reports in the countries concerned. Without Registration it is impossible to maintain adequate standards of education, or to enforce efficient discipline throughout the nursing profession.

In regard to organization in the United Kingdom, if the Matrons and the hospital committees, who have hitherto held aloof from united action, now realise its necessity, and if, as we have reason to believe, many of these accept the principle of State Registration, there seems no reason why consultation between them and the Central Committee for State Registration of Nurses should not once more result in an agreed Bill, as it has already done in the case of the various Bills at one time before Parliament. If the fundamental principles underlying the Bill are approved, then its details might well form the subject for discussion, and we might go to Parliament with an agreed Bill. We have the pledge of the Prime Minister that if the medical and nursing professions elaborate

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