

should be heard in detail. At the same time, he thought that there was some misconception as to the powers of the Board. He explained section 23 of the Companies' Act, 1867, under which the Board of Trade could refuse to allow the Society to incorporate without the word limited. This was the Board's only power, as it was open to the promoters to incorporate with the addition of the word limited, or as an unlimited company. They had, however, preferred to apply to the Board for the right to incorporate without the word limited.

Many of the objectors had pointed out the hardship involved to nurses in being placed under the control of the proposed Society. It was, however, purely voluntary and relied on its own merits to induce nurses to join it. No authority would be conferred upon it by the Board. In conclusion, the Chairman stated that a shorthand note of the proceedings would be taken and submitted to Lord Salisbury, the President of the Board of Trade. The opposition were then invited to state their case.

THE ROYAL BRITISH NURSES' ASSOCIATION.

For the Royal British Nurses' Association, Sir James Crichton Browne said that from its inception it had had great aims as to improving the profession of nursing, and would welcome the co-operation of any Society which it considered would help in that good work. It was because the Association was convinced that the Society was injurious to its interests that it appeared in opposition to the application, which appeared both inopportune and a gratuitous and unnecessary encroachment on the work of the Association, not only so, but it was vicious in principle. Two Bills for the Registration of Nurses were now before the House. Had such a measure become law the irresponsible and rival Society would have been strangled in its cradle. Was it expedient that legal status should be given to this Society, whose object appeared to be to steal a march upon the registrationists, so as to obtain, before the legislation which all hoped and believed was inevitable, that status which they could not afterwards hope to gain?

The speaker also drew the attention of the Board of Trade to the reply given to the British Nurses' Association in 1891. He proposed that consideration of the application should be postponed until after the Select Committee of the House of Commons appointed to inquire into the expediency of the Registration of Nurses had reported to the House, and that if the applicants subsequently applied again to the Board of Trade they should, like the Royal British Nurses' Association, be referred to the Privy Council. If this new Society were launched at the present time confusion would be worse confounded, and the British public still more bewildered. Further, its constitution was vicious in principle, and contrary to sound policy. The provisions of the scheme were not easy to understand being clothed in the verbiage of the Stock Exchange, but it was manifestly an attempt on the part

of a body of laymen to capture and exploit the nursing profession. No doubt they believe the movement was for the benefit of nurses. But what did they know of nursing? With equal knowledge and with equal modesty they might attempt to examine electrical engineers. Such a scheme was not a bit less preposterous than the present one. Unqualified nurses were a great danger to the public, but it would be a still greater danger if unqualified persons were allowed to undertake their examination and control. The signatories were very much mistaken if they thought that nurses would now put themselves exclusively under lay control. Nevertheless, pressure could be brought to bear upon nurses by their training-schools, of which the applicants were liberal supporters, to join the Society, and a kind of stigma might be placed upon them if they did not do so. All of us were liable to err at times. No one was infallible, not even the richest. Nurses did not belong to the feeble-minded section of the community; on the contrary they were intelligent, and increasingly so day by day, and would not in these days put up with unprofessional dictation.

THE CENTRAL HOSPITAL COUNCIL FOR LONDON.

Other members of the R.B.N.A. Deputation having spoken, the Central Hospital Council for London was called upon, when Mr. Charles Burt said that in view of the present proceedings in Parliament the application appeared most out of place. He differed, however, from the former speaker, inasmuch as he thought the consideration of the application should not be postponed, but dealt with immediately. The suggested society would be a close corporation which would not satisfy the nurses, and he was quite sure it would not satisfy the hospitals.

The Hon. Sydney Holland, Chairman of the London Hospital, said that the Central Hospital Council for London objected to the principle of Registration altogether. Registration could not ensure a good nurse; a woman a hundred years old might still be on the Register, and therefore, presumably, still fit to nurse the public. Registration would afford the public a continuing guarantee that a woman was a good nurse, although she might have ceased to be so. The difference between the proposed Registration and that by the State was that the scheme now proposed would probably fail while State Registration would succeed. In relation to a Matron's reference being a necessity for Registration Mr. Holland said such a reference would be perfunctory; thus, at the London Hospital if they had anyone not particularly good they could shunt her on to the R.B.N.A. (Shame.) What, asked the speaker, did Lord Rothschild know about nursing? Where were the nursing authorities? All the signatories to the Memorandum were laymen with the exception of Mr. Cosmo Bonsor, who as Treasurer of Guy's knew something of nursing. Mr. Bonsor here repudiated all such knowledge; he "knew nothing." "Then heaven help the

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