

of their agreement. The Central Committee was not opposed to the College as such, but it was opposed to its control of the Register.

Referring to the Nation's Fund for Nurses, Major Chapple continued: "I resented the first advertisement of the Nation's Fund for Nurses because it was an appeal to the public to apply subscriptions to two things—the endowment of the College of Nursing, Ltd., and a Benevolent Fund for Nurses who have been disabled in the War. How does one depend upon and interlace with the other? A Benevolent Fund for the benefit of nurses trained in the past must be differentiated from a College to train future nurses. Nurses trained in the past have during this war served our soldiers nobly and well and command the sympathy of the Nation, a College for the training of women in the future can have no part or lot with the recognition of nurses trained in the past. The advertisement, therefore, looked like exploiting these nurses, as if the College were endeavouring to found itself on the public sympathy with the nurses disabled in the war. I asked a question in the House of Commons on the subject and in that question I drew a clear distinction between the College and the Fund for the assistance of nurses. Moreover, there is nothing to say what proportion of the money contributed is to go to each. I have intimated to those likely to contribute that they should most carefully examine the proposals as to the Fund."

Major Chapple expressed the opinion that, whether the College was prepared to come into line further or not, the Central Committee should try to get on with its Bill. If we got a Bill, with the support of the Government, he thought it would go through. The nurses in this War had done magnificently; their courage and heroism, not only in hospitals, but on the battlefield, had been superb. Wherever it was possible for them to render assistance to the wounded, even under fire, they were willing to endure it and showed the same self-possession and resolute courage in danger as our magnificent men. He was hopeful that, as the services of women in the war had won for them the Parliamentary vote, so the war would give nurses their registration.

The College could oppose us, but they would probably be willing to come to terms as to a conjoint Bill, because of the difficulties in which they found themselves in regard to promises made to their members. There was no vital objection to the College, so long as it was optional, not mandatory. If the College did not come to terms, there was no doubt that after the War we could get any Bill we liked; but if we helped the College out of its difficulty and went to Parliament with an agreed Bill, it would, he thought, be passed by the House of Commons and certainly by the House of Lords as a War Measure.

The Chairman said that State Registrationists had never been obstructive. They stood for fundamental principles and it was their duty to safeguard these in justice to the nurses.

STATE REGISTRATION OF NURSES IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

Miss Carrie M. Hall, R.N., Chief Nurse in Great Britain of the American Red Cross Nursing Service, said, in part:—"When I came over here I came with a small steamer trunk and camp kit. I left behind all the cares of training, and brought no material from which to draw data. I venture to say your President could tell you more about State Registration of Nurses in America than I can. It is a matter of history that Mrs. Bedford Fenwick suggested to America that it would be a good thing to have State Registration of Nurses. The campaign was begun in 1901 by forming State Associations. In America each of the States has to enact its own law, and I believe a Nurses' Registration Law has now been enacted in 46 different States. No two of these laws are exactly alike, but, in fundamental things, they are the same in all the States. In most the law did not in the first instance make registration compulsory; but protected the title of Registered Nurse; in several of the States it has since been amended and registration is compulsory. All registered nurses are required to have general training, and the general training school makes its own affiliations with hospitals to secure training for its pupils in those branches in which it lacks necessary material. The passage of the Registration Laws has brought home the need of the State Inspection of Training Schools. In a few States this was passed with the original law, in others it had since been adopted.

How does registration affect the individual nurse? Nurses had an answer to this question last year, if never before. The Red Cross Organisation has always stood for high standards in nursing education, and it is a necessary qualification for enrolment as a Red Cross nurse that the applicant must be a Registered Nurse. That, at any rate, was the rule up to six months ago, and hundreds of nurses who could not get enrolled as Red Cross Nurses because they were not registered began to look round and see what registration was any way! Our experience in working for Registration laws has made nurses something of politicians, and made the large majority suffragists."

The Chairman emphasised the point that since 1901 the energy and conscience of the nurse in the United States of America had compelled legislation in nearly every State. British nurses have had a Bill before Parliament for fourteen years but they are not going to wait another fourteen years for an efficient curriculum of nursing education, their legal status, and the protection of the public.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)