

sure Major Astor would agree with the proposition that the health of the community should be the care of the State, though that of the individual was a more debatable question. It might be asked why members of the medical profession should take part in a deputation on nursing questions. In the inspection of school children, the care of Infant Welfare Centres, and other branches of nursing connected with public Departments, nurses were intimately bound up with the profession of medicine, and indeed formed one of its composite links. Medical men could not regard with indifference anything to do with the nursing profession. He saw that there was a probability that private members' Bills would be barred again this Session and wished therefore on behalf of the Royal British Nurses' Association and its affiliated societies, to urge strongly that the Local Government Board should bring in a Bill for the State Registration of Trained Nurses and that before doing so it should take expert advice from the nursing profession and the medical profession. It was important that the Register established should be one of fully trained women nurses, as provided in the Bill promoted by the Central Committee for the State Registration of Nurses, with Supplementary Registers of Mental and Male Nurses only. He emphasised this as there was another Bill which took power to establish an unlimited number of Supplementary Registers of Specialists. Mr. Paterson maintained that the medical profession had only one State Register, that specialism should follow general training, not precede it, and specialists should not get recognition from the State. He concluded by referring to the close co-operation between the medical and nursing professions, and doubted whether medical practitioners fully realised the urgent need for the organisation of the nursing profession. It was not a question which affected only nurses, but a public matter, of vital importance to the State, that a full supply of properly qualified nurses should be available.

MRS. BEDFORD FENWICK.

Mrs. Bedford Fenwick said that for the last forty years, some of which she had spent as Matron of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, she had taken the greatest interest in all that concerned the welfare of the nursing profession. She would like to emphasise very strongly that to enable trained nurses to prepare for their special duties under a Ministry of Health a Nurses' Registration Bill should be passed at an early date, creating an independent Statutory Authority as the Governing Body of the Nursing Profession, charged with duties analogous to those imposed on the General Medical Council in relation to the medical profession. It should be an independent body, above suspicion of vested interests, which should define the qualifications, and maintain discipline in the ranks of trained nurses.

The Nursing Profession greatly needed an educational authority, as at the present time the majority of nursing schools were organised by unprofessional persons the members of hospital

committees—and though certain institutions appointed nursing committees, the educational qualifications for trained nurses were, for the most part, approved and controlled by laymen; The educational question was at the root of the demand for Registration. Nurses required better educational facilities. A General Nursing Council, though it should define and maintain standards of nursing education, supervise a Central Examination, and register successful candidates, should not be the body which should carry out the teaching of nurses. Such teaching must be practically organised in colleges, and in nursing schools attached to hospitals. In the Central Committee's Bill provision was made for regulating and supervising the course of training, and the conduct of examinations for testing the knowledge gained by pupils during their training.

The Bill of the College of Nursing, Ltd., was one which sought to include educational, disciplinary, and economic control of the whole nursing profession under one Bill. This would effect a monopoly and deprive trained nurses of any degree of professional independence.

The Central Committee was in favour of the Nursing Profession having a large amount of power on its own Governing Body. It made provision for the help of the Medical Profession, and the representation of the Nursing Schools, but it was opposed to the domination of the employers of nurses. The Governing Body should be free from economic pressure. They wished to see the nursing profession built up on sound educational and economic principles, and not on charity. It was important that a Bill for the Registration of Nurses should be introduced into Parliament without delay. When the Minister of Health, whom we hoped would be shortly appointed, considered the questions which would concern his Department, he would find in relation to the qualifications of the medical profession he had for his guidance the qualification established by the General Medical Council; in regard to midwifery there was the standard—not a high one, but still the standard—maintained by the Central Midwives' Board. In regard to nursing no standard was defined, and those who had been working for so long to obtain this reform in this country, and had seen the Registration of Trained Nurses become an accomplished fact in many of our Dominions, and in forty-six of the United States of America, felt that there had been a lamentable lack of appreciation of the requirements of the sick on the part of the Government, that an Act for the Registration of Nurses had not been placed on the Statute Book many years ago.

The Royal British Nurses' Association and its Affiliated Societies earnestly petitioned, therefore, that, if time could not be granted to a private member to bring in a Bill, the Local Government Board, or the Ministry of Health would bring in a Bill to protect the interests of the nurses and the public. Trained nurses were hopeful that the neglect of the past would be re-

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