

## STATE REGISTRATION UP TO DATE.

There has been great apprehension amongst certificated nurses that Sub-section 4, Clause 12, of the Nurses' Registration Bill, which deals with practising nurses during the term of grace, as amended in Committee, will admit untrained nurses to the General Register. In our opinion the powers of the Council are too wide as it stands, as the word "trained" was eliminated from the Clause as drafted in the Central Committee's Bill, and we learn that, upon the recommendation of Major Barnett, who is in charge of the Bill, the word "trained" will be reinserted in Report stage, as undue pressure might be brought to bear on the Council to accept as "satisfactory" experience without training, which was not the intention of Sir Kingsley Wood, who amended the Clause in Committee.

At the same time nurses must realise that in starting a Statutory Register, Parliament will insist upon a term of grace, during which nurses in *bona-fide* practice, even if they do not hold a certificate, will be given a chance to register, so that they will not be deprived of power to earn their living. This privilege was granted to men practising as doctors, and women as midwives, when the Medical and Midwives Acts became law, and the precedent thus established will not be denied to nurses. After the time of grace the Nursing Profession will be built up on a well-defined and thoroughly efficient basis; nurses owe it to their own apathy that Registration has not been in force long ago, and the term of grace long since past. Even now they are so ignorant that they are being manipulated by the Council of the College of Nursing, Ltd., to wreck the Bill which in the aggregate is an extremely liberal measure. Too liberal, so far as the rank-and-file of the profession are concerned, to please the autocrats who manage the Nursing Schools.

The *Times* published an exhaustive criticism of the College of Nursing Bill, by Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, on May 21st, which, we are informed, has enlightened many politicians and others as to the true aspect of the Registration controversy between the organized Nurses and the Nursing Schools.

Sir Arthur Stanley presented the College case in the *Times* on the 26th inst., but no attempt was made to controvert or disprove Mrs. Fenwick's statements. Indeed, they are incontrovertible. The following unjustifiable claim will show the trend of the arguments advanced by

Sir Arthur Stanley:—"That the legal registration of nurses has, largely through the efforts of the College of Nursing, won its way to the favourable consideration of the public is shown by the fact that the Bill for that purpose lately introduced into the House of Commons passed its second reading without a division being challenged."

This is sheer bluff. The Central Committee's Bill was not challenged because every Party in the House had been converted to the principle of Nurses' Registration long before the College was founded, and it would have been hopelessly out-voted if it had dared to show its well-known animus to the Nurses' Bill at the second reading. Had not the Nurses' Bill passed the House of Lords in 1908 without a division at any stage—in spite of the opposition of the Nursing Schools—and again in 1914 in the House of Commons, when the representatives of these same people demanded a division, was not our majority 229? We are well used to the College policy of attempting to reap where it has not sown, and of claiming credit for the work of others, but this most recent evidence of such a policy is much to be deprecated.

We always said the "Antis" would claim credit for State Registration when Parliament at last listened to the rightful claims of the State Registration Party. Now they have done it.

Anyway, let us thank our stars we have been consistent all the time. The more publicity given to the Nurses' cause the better. Their claims are just, and it is to be hoped Parliament will recognise them as such. Legislation must protect their rights, not only as professional workers, but as British citizens.

Dear Miss Dock writes from Fayetteville, U.S.A.: "I am sitting breathless on the edge of my chair waiting for the final news of your Act. Wouldn't it be wonderful if— But I will not risk hoodooing it by mentioning the word."

We wonder what this gallant pioneer of liberty for nurses will feel when she reads the news that the Council of the College of Nursing Ltd., is trying to torpedo the Nurses' Charter of Emancipation, after a thirty years' struggle with their employers who control the Nursing Schools, especially when she realises that the majority of the Matrons have united with anti-registration hospital Governors in their attempt to suppress free evolution in the ranks of trained nurses. It is a position quite unthinkable in connection with the Superintendents of Nurse Training Schools in our Dominions overseas, and in the United States. They, as professional women, have throughout the recent years of

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