

secure the agreement of all parties concerned. Another reason of expediency is that, if your Lordships accept this Bill or if you delay registration, you will force nurses into trade unions. It is what is already happening. You have seen it in the case of the Asylum Workers' Association, and if you force nurses to form trade unions in order to secure that which they regard, and rightly regard, as a measure of justice and a right to them, you will simply throw them into the arms of the Labour Party. Is that a desirable thing to do at the present time?

#### ON THE GROUNDS OF PRINCIPLE.

"Now let me turn to that which is far more important, and that is the matter of principle. But let me premise that registration is, in its essence, a very simple matter, and on that ground, and on that ground alone, it is a very grave mistake to complicate it with a totally different issue. The College of Nursing, which is promoting the Bill that is now before your Lordships, cares only about incorporation. That is the one main, primary object of their Bill. They want to get rid of the word "Limited" after their title. For some reason or another it is extremely irksome to them. They can do that without your assistance. They can do it through the Board or Trade under the Companies Act, 1867. They do not want an Act of Parliament for it, and there is no need whatever for them to take up the time of your Lordships about it.

"It is just as well to be guided by precedent when you undertake legislation of this kind, and for the registration of nurses we have well-defined precedents in the Medical Acts and the Midwives Act. It is desirable to follow these precedents in order that the legislation on State registration may be harmonised with the other great measure which is before Parliament—namely, the Ministry of Health Bill. The normal functions of a statutory governing body are education, registration, and discipline; and, as my noble friend who moved the Second Reading of the Bill has said—he made it rather a boast, though I cannot think why—the College of Nursing does not confine itself to these three ordinary and accepted functions. It goes far outside of them into all kinds of philanthropic enterprises. Again, I ask, why should you tack philanthropic enterprises on to a perfectly simple and necessary measure for the registration of trained nurses? This College of Nursing aims at all kinds of things like homes, clubs, and provincial centres. I say it is most unwise to tack such enterprises, which, after all, are private enterprises, on to a Bill of this kind.

"Now, let me remind your Lordships what the precedents are. You have, first of all, the great body of Medical Acts, and the medical profession has its statutory governing body, the General Medical Council. Then you have the Midwives Act, and because midwives are already registered, they have their body similar to that which the advocates of State Registration wish to set up under the Central Midwives Board. Those two bodies define the standards of education; they

do not educate. Their function is to supervise and inspect, and it is obviously wrong and inconvenient that those who supervise and inspect should actually be the teachers. This is one of the fundamental differences of principle between us. The College of Nursing wish to educate and have control of the education, whereas our principle is to stick to the established precedent of the Medical Acts and the Midwives Act, and confine the functions of the statutory governing body to education, registration, and discipline.

"I am not in the confidence of the Government and have no notion as to what line they will take about this Bill, but so far as I am able to judge, I believe, if your Lordships accept the Bill which is now before the House of Commons, you will find you are passing into law a measure which will harmonise and conform to the general scheme of the Ministry of Health Bill, and you will be doing that which will be convenient to the President of the Local Government Board in that great and important measure which he is now bringing through Parliament.

"The next question of principle is the claim put forward by the advocates of this Bill, that it is more democratic than ours. I am sure your Lordships will not be misled by a question-begging use of this term, which, of all political terms, is most frequently misused and abused.

"The point on which the whole controversy hinges is this. The College of Nursing secured a good deal of support for their Bill by loudly advertising the democratic principle which they said resided in a certain clause embodied in the seventh draft of their Bill. The Bill before your Lordships is the eighth draft, and it shows how many hesitations and doubts they have had about this measure. The clause in question, Clause 5, subsection (1) (a), was as follows—

'Of the persons elected by nurses on the General Register to represent England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland respectively, five-sixths shall be nurses on the General Register.'

You will hardly believe it, but that clause, on which they base their whole claim of democratic concession, has actually been deleted from the Bill, and the Bill now lays down that the direct representatives of the nurses on the General Council shall not be "nurses" but "persons." Persons may be anybody. They may be women, or they may be men; they may be nurses, or they may be doctors. They may be the lay managers of hospitals, and it, therefore, by no means secures that the representatives of the nurses should be elected from the body of trained nurses. As it is, not one single seat is absolutely secured to nurses on their own governing body. The compromise which was embodied in that clause in the former draft of the Bill, on which a large support was secured and which has brought about this flood of literature that has been showered upon us, has been broken, and all this pretence of democratic principle falls to the ground."

"The Bill of the Central Committee, before

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