

signs of it; and it is an ingenious way of getting the thing up.

The position is this: Women now have the vote; they have to be considered more than they used to be. It is not so easy to say, "I do not like the registration of nurses." Women are now likely to get what they insist on having, and the noble Lord tells us that he recognises they must have registration. But, he says, "let me see how I can make it as little harmful as possible." The College of Nursing, Limited, does not attract the nurses by the force of its own virtue or its past history (which is a short one) but it attracts them by the remarkable circular to which your Lordships' attention has already been called, and of which, I think, it is worth while reading the exact words—

"Every certificated nurse should apply at once for registration by the College of Nursing. (1) Because the Council of the College of Nursing has drafted a Nurses Registration Bill which provides that the Register already formed by the College of Nursing shall be the first Register under the Act. If, therefore, you are on the College Register, you will automatically and without further fee, be placed upon the State Register, when the Nurses Registration Bill is passed."

That sort of statement does not take in your Lordships, or any lawyer, or anybody with Parliamentary experience. But what does a nurse think when she receives a statement like that? She naturally takes it at its face value, and she probably takes it for granted that it is a proper and natural way of getting on the Register, and that if she wishes to be in her proper place she should get on the Register of this College of Nursing as soon as possible. In that way you get a large membership, and you come to this House and say, "This should be the dominant body because it has the largest membership."

I am not prepared to analyse in any detail, and I think it would be out of order to do so, the exact method of election to the Council as between the two Bills. I think the Council which gives direct representation—which gives them the representation for which they ask and insist—is in the Bill which is not before your Lordships' House. I think your Lordships would be unwise to confuse the issue by giving a Second Reading to this Bill. The noble Marquess said that we could give a Second Reading to the Bill without assenting to the principle of the measure; but if we went to a Division it is difficult to say we have not assented to the principle, and I think you would have prejudiced the issue in an unfortunate way. If this is the proper way to constitute the governing body of nurses it will be perfectly easy to do so by an Amendment to the other Bill when it comes before us.

Notwithstanding the statement of Lord Knutsford, that there is a majority of nursing opinion in favour of this Bill, there is not the slightest evidence of it. The opinion I have formed from all the literature I have read—and I have taken some pains to inform myself on the subject—is that the overwhelming mass of nurses are opposed tooth and nail to this Bill, and even if it were to become law—though I am convinced it would

not pass the other House—you would find an unofficial Register compiled in opposition to it. I hope that your Lordships will hesitate to give a Second Reading to a Bill which is merely intended to camouflage the real issue.

#### AN UNFORTUNATE POSITION.

LORD BUCKMASTER thought it unfortunate that they were called upon to decide a matter in a manner which prevented them from really being able to comprehend the issues involved. He advocated having the whole matter thrashed out before a Committee of the House.

THE EARL OF DENBIGH also advocated that the Bill should be read a second time and referred to a Select Committee.

#### THE VIEW OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD.

VISCOUNT SANDHURST, as we have already reported, expressed the hope of the President of the Local Government Board that the Bill should be given a Second Reading on the ground that it embodied the principle of registration for which the Government desired to secure legislative authority as a protection for the Nursing Profession itself and also for the public. Having said that, it was his duty to add that he was not in a position to commit the Government in any way to the bodies described, nor to the actual College so described in the Bill. His Right Hon. Friend proposed to see how far it was possible to get some agreement, or how much of each Bill could be taken in the near future, or immediately, as the basis of a really good Bill.

Lord Sandhurst said that there was no room for any doubt whatever that the nurses as a whole—he believed almost without exception—desired some form of registration, and that would be a sufficient reason for supporting the general principle. He expressed a doubt as to whether Parliament would agree to leave to a private body, or even to a statutory body, a dominant position as to the conditions of the first Register. That Register must necessarily include a large number of nurses of a training below the standard that would be considered satisfactory in the case of applications subsequently for admission to the Register. "Look," said his Lordship, "at the number of V.A.D.s who have served the country for three or four years, and who are not qualified by examination certificates, but who have done most noble and self-sacrificing work. That work deserves consideration. There should therefore be inserted in the Bill some guidance as to admission to the first Register."

In conclusion Lord Sandhurst supported the Second Reading of the Bill.

On Question whether the word "now" shall stand part of the original Motion?

Their Lordships divided: Contents 62; Not Contents 22.

Resolved in the affirmative, and the Bill read a second time accordingly.

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