

training should be at the disposal of every nurse; but training could not be carried on without money, and no hospital nowadays had any money. He thought the General Nursing Council should consider this financial aspect of the question, and get the ear of the Minister of Health, otherwise the nurse would herself have to pay for her training.

He hoped the General Nursing Council would do what it could to help to get a Government Grant. The Municipalities could also put in an application for a grant in their omnibus Bills.

Mrs. Fenwick said she would answer the two questions put by the Chairman at once. First, what could be done about the young woman who had passed through her training but could not get through the State Examination? She thought the whole standard of Nursing Education could not be kept back for a minority who did not attain the required standard. Further, it was the plain duty of the Matrons, if they found that certain nurses in training had not sufficient mentality or education to assimilate instruction, to advise them, after a fair trial, to adopt some other calling. It was not just to keep them working hard for three years if there was no reasonable hope that they would attain the required standard.

But it was probable, following the precedent of other professions, that a nurse who failed once to pass the State Examination would be permitted to enter for it a second time.

The Chairman's second question in regard to finance was opportune. She quite agreed that defraying the cost of the education of nurses was a serious question. It was one which concerned the Education Department, as well as the Ministry of Health, and the former department had already been subsidising some schools. It would therefore be able, and perhaps willing, to subsidise Nursing Education for the benefit of the whole community. Preventive medicine and nursing would be more and more the medicine and nursing of the future, and she considered that both medical and nursing education should be subsidised. She assured the Chairman that the subject had not been overlooked by the General Nursing Council.

Miss Golding, Matron of a private Nursing Home, asked whether many nurses were registering, and expressed the view that many more would do so if they did not have to part with their original and irreplaceable certificates for the purpose of identification.

Mrs. Fenwick replied that the General Nursing Council was a statutory body. The Council had been entrusted by Parliament to compile a correct Register, and to do this it was its duty to verify documents. That duty could not be deputed to unauthorised persons. Original certificates were well taken care of, and registered upon return. So far, no certificate has been reported missing. The Act did not enforce compulsory registration. Nurses were free to register or not, as they chose; but the legal status conferred by the Act and the protected title of "Registered Nurse" would become more and more indispensable as time went on.

The following questions were sent up in writing :

Question.—What is the difference between the College of Nursing and State Registration?

Answer.—Mrs. Fenwick said she was not there to criticise the College. Such questions were best addressed to College officials; but she explained that the General Nursing Council for England and Wales was the body entrusted by Parliament with the duty of forming, maintaining, and publishing the Statutory Register which was legal evidence of the training of a Nurse. The College of Nursing Register was a list of its members, and had no legal status. In her opinion the publication of the College Register was 25 years too late, and it was waste of energy and money to publish it. The Nurses had worked for State Registration for nearly 30 years, and it was treating their intelligence with contempt to offer them anything less. As Nurses' Registration Acts had been passed, it would be wise for voluntary Registers to close down.

Question.—Would it not be possible for the Registrar to go from town to town in England and Wales and interview Nurses and scrutinise their certificates?

Answer.—No. In this instance the mountain could not go to Mahomet. The Registrar was kept exceedingly busy scrutinising certificates at Headquarters in London, and in superintending the various departments there.

VOTES OF THANKS.

Miss Drysdale, Superintendent of Queen's Nurses' Q.V.J.I. Central Home, Liverpool, in proposing a vote of thanks to Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, expressed her pleasure at the opportunity of doing so. It had been a great privilege to listen to her address; no one was better fitted to give them the information they had received, for Mrs. Fenwick had worked at the subject for many years. They might not always have agreed with her, but they had always revered her, for she had worked consistently for the good of the nurses and the public, and had never wavered, never sat on the fence.

She would also like to thank Miss Worsley for organising the meeting, and enabling the nurses of Liverpool to meet Mrs. Bedford Fenwick and hear her inspiring lecture. It had meant a great deal of hard work.

Miss Drysdale concluded by moving a cordial vote of thanks to Mrs. Fenwick for her able, interesting, and instructive address.

Mrs. Roberts, Matron of the Walton Institution, in seconding, said that they would all go home and tell their fellow nurses what State Registration of Nurses really meant.

The vote was carried by acclamation. Mrs. Fenwick, in responding, said she hoped that well-trained Liverpool nurses would encourage the General Nursing Council, and the pioneers who had blazed the trail, by applying for registration at the earliest possible date, and thus help to form a solid and efficient basis upon which to build up the future Profession of Nursing.

The meeting terminated with a very cordial vote of thanks to the Chairman moved by Mr. Newbolt.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)