

THE LEICESTER ROYAL INFIRMARY NURSES' LEAGUE.

The autumn meeting of the Leicester Royal Infirmary Nurses' League was held in the Nurses Home of the Royal Infirmary, on November 17th, and was made the occasion for an invitation to other trained nurses in the city and neighbourhood, to which they cordially responded; about 130 nurses in all, including school nurses, district nurses, private nurses, and health visitors attending the meeting.

By invitation, Miss Margaret Breay spoke on "The Necessity of Trained Nurses registering early." The President, Miss C. E. Vincent, R.R.C., was in the Chair, and amongst the members present were Miss Carpenter Turner, R.R.C., Miss I. Sumner, R.R.C., Miss Pell Smith, and Miss Spittal, A.R.R.C. The President, in introducing Miss Breay, reminded the meeting that Acts for the State Registration of Nurses were passed in December, 1919, and said how much the Members of the League were looking forward to hearing all she had to tell them about the provisions of the English Act. She hoped that many questions would be asked, and was sure that Miss Breay would explain fully any points not quite understood. She expressed her conviction that Nurses should register on the State Register, even if they only considered the matter from the personal one of self-interest.

Miss Vincent read a letter from Miss G. A. Rogers expressing her disappointment at being unable to be present, and her opinion that all Nurses in active practice should register. The President then asked Miss Breay to address the meeting.

THE ADDRESS.

Miss Breay said she regarded it as a great honour as well as a great pleasure to have been asked to speak to the Royal Infirmary, Leicester, Nurses' League, for ever since her early nursing days, which went back to 1885, she had always held the Training School for Nurses at the Leicester Infirmary in veneration, and had the greatest admiration for its standards, its methods, and its results. It had had high traditions put before it by so courageous a pioneer as Miss Burt, by Miss Rogers, who had left her impress not only on the members of the School, but on the walls of the Infirmary, and by Miss Vincent, who was now carrying on those traditions and all that they stood for, as well as developing them to meet the needs of the present day.

After referring to the supreme moment in the House of Lords, when trained nurses listened to the Royal Assent being given to the Nurses' Registration Bills, Miss Breay said that it might well have seemed to them that the time had come to say "Nunc Dimittis." But that was not so. The implement that was to weld the trained nurses of the United Kingdom into a compact body had been forged; much remained to be done before that end was accomplished.

She need not, to the members of the Royal Infirmary Leicester Nurses' League, elaborate the point that throughout the thirty years' struggle for State Registration of Nurses, one figure had been in the forefront inspiring, energising, guiding the movement to ultimate success. There were those in the room who knew it well. "Do not," she said, "let those of us who will benefit from the work for nurses of Ethel Gordon Fenwick from her far-sighted vision, selfless pertinacity, and rare moral courage, in contending for our interests—often to the detriment of her own—forget to render her the gratitude which is her due."

But no General, however brilliant, could fight without an army behind him, and, in the Registration Army many members of the Leicester League had borne a valiant and honourable part. If she only mentioned Miss Rogers, Miss Jessie Davies, Miss Pell Smith, Miss Sherlock, and Miss Waldron, as conspicuous instances, it was not because she did not know that many more had given both money and personal service to furthering the cause. Miss Breay mentioned as the effects to be anticipated from the Nurses' Registration Act the standardization of Nursing Education, the protection of the honourable status and name of Registered Nurses, the protection of their economic interests and the granting by Parliament to the Registered Nurses of the hardly-won privilege and inestimable boon of a large measure of self-government.

She further pointed out that the sixteen nurse members nominated by the Minister of Health (because till the Register was formed there was no electorate) would, not later than December, 1922, go out of office. Then it would be the privilege and the important duty of the Registered Nurses of the Kingdom to place in office those who would largely control their professional destinies for the next five years. She emphasised the importance of Registered Nurses, observing in the reports in the professional Press (by which she meant any weekly paper for nurses edited and controlled by members of their own profession, which at present reduced the number to one—THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING) how the present nurse members of the Council were serving them. If they thought a member was promoting and safeguarding their interests they would be wise to elect her again, for she would have gained valuable experience during her present term of office, but if when she came before them, asking for their suffrages, she had not satisfied them in these respects, then would be their opportunity as well as their duty, to give their vote to another candidate. The responsibility as to how we voted was our own responsibility, not lightly to be decided; but, if we succeeded in securing the election of the candidates for whom we voted then we should support them in their work for us by every means in our power.

When their Hon. Secretary wrote to her last July to ask if she would speak to them in November on the importance of trained nurses becoming

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