

ever bear in mind that human beings can never be regarded in terms of commodities, you may leave the machine in the factory and return to it when you will, but if the sick organism, in which dwells the human spirit, is to be left without skilled care for a definite number of hours, the chances are that you return to find that it has done both with time and you. It may appear an easy and effective way to guard against overwork for nurses simply to encourage the Bill to go through and then leave it to do its best or its worst; but we would urge that no such irresponsible attitude be adopted in regard to it, but rather that all shall realise that only upon lines of self-government and professional organisation should standards of hours be set up. It is true that organisation is difficult, and it can only be complete when all nurses realise that through combining together and taking an intelligent interest in the politics of their profession they will find the healthy method for its development. In other words, we should prove that we are able to govern our own profession instead of placing it under any Act that is bound to stultify its opportunities for good in the community. The tendency of the age is to mechanise everything, and the promoters of this Bill doubtless believe that they can reduce the activities of our profession to a machine-like precision; but if the spirit of nursing exists it will never consent to be mechanised and held in chains; rather we must strive to ensure that the profession survives the mechanical age (which is our own time), and that it preserves the professional soul alive for coming generations.

At another time we considered the Bill more in relation to its economic aspects and what would be the effect of its passage into law for nurses in various branches, and particularly those in private practice. Since we approached Members of Parliament we have had many letters from Members endorsing the action of the Executive Committee in opposing the Bill. So far not a single Member has written in support of the Measure, but a mere passive resistance to it will not serve if the attempted legislation is pressed forward in a new Session. Therefore we would urge all members to study the whole position and to be ready to express their views to their Members of Parliament should occasion arise. If Members of Parliament would get busy about the employment of so many unregistered and half-trained nurses in many hospitals, and other departments of nursing, they would do the sick a great service and would accomplish more to establish just remuneration for duly registered nurses than any Bill, for the restriction of hours of work and the establishment of rates of remuneration, is ever likely to achieve.

It is true that this Bill does seek to establish certain standards of pay, but what it would give with one hand it takes away with the other, for the only nurses to whom it allows liberty of action are those who are unregistered. They are left a free field to practise when they will, and the result of the passage of such a Bill would be protection for the unqualified at the expense of those who have attained to what the State regards as an adequate knowledge of nursing. In fact, the effect of the Measure would be actually to set a premium on inefficiency and to encourage and aggrandize those who practise the art of nursing unskillfully. We are entirely in sympathy with the promoters of the Bill when they seek to compel the hospitals to offer due remuneration for the services of the highly-trained registered nurses, but another aspect of the Bill is that it seeks to enforce high rates of pay to student nurses. The tendency here again is to set an exaggerated economic value upon inadequate knowledge. Members of other professions do not seek for any remuneration whatever while they are acquiring their professional equipment; we are likely to get a much more educated and altruistic type of women into the nursing profession if, in this aspect

of the question, we continue to regard nurses in training in the light of students whose prize is not a certain number of pounds per annum, to be procured simply by entering for work in a hospital, but rather a valuable qualification which will entitle them to receive just remuneration as the value of their professional knowledge once it is acquired. It may be one of the vagaries of human nature that little store is set by knowledge that is gained without sacrifice; indeed, it is true of human nature that according to the measure of sacrifice involved to the same extent do we exert ourselves to make the most of the opportunities placed before us for acquiring knowledge and education. We cannot too strongly insist that, when nurses have obtained their hospital certificates and had their names placed upon one or other of the State Registers, they should receive, in return for their highly skilled services, a remuneration which will enable them to be perfectly independent and to make use of their opportunities in life. But the suggested salaries (as set out in the Bill) are out of all proportion in the relationship of the scale suggested for nurses in training and that put forward as suitable for those who hold their full qualification and whose names are on the State Register of Nurses.

MISS CUTLER'S DANCE.

Great appreciation has been expressed of Miss Cutler's hospitality in giving such a very enjoyable dance on the 18th of April last. About a hundred and twenty ladies and gentlemen were present in equal numbers and the floor was crowded throughout the whole evening. It was a very gay evening indeed and when it came near the hour of departure, we heard a doctor try to convince Miss Cutler that other clocks were put forward before the official hour of 2 a.m. and, if this could be done here, her guests would be deeply indebted to her for an extra hour's dancing. However, she was determined that no liberties would be taken with summer time arrangements on a Saturday evening and her arguments proved immediately convincing when it was found that the suggested "finessing" would curtail and not prolong the evening. The flowers given and arranged by Miss Treasure were very much admired and their loveliness added greatly to the enjoyment of the guests. As much variety as possible was introduced into the programme and when it was discovered that Dr. MacKinnon had brought his bagpipes, some of the "barbarians from the North" immediately suggested an eightsome reel. When they had danced it, to the music of this champion of Scottish pipers, the Sassenachs, with all frankness, expressed the opinion that they could not see where the pleasure lay in such energetic dancing as all this. However, Dr. MacKinnon informs us that, in the opinion of some alienists, "all pipers are mad"; perhaps this "madness" may be so infectious as to rouse the Scots from their natural reserve and set them dancing, with an exaggeration of their natural energy, for the entertainment of their neighbours south of the Border.

Miss Cutler was thoroughly amused when the father of a party of young people drew from his overcoat pocket, as he was about to depart, a pack of cards, remarking that he had brought those in order to amuse himself (and others who did not dance) "when they got bored"; but he had been far too interested in the dancing and all the pretty dresses to care to suggest Bridge as a last resource against an evening's boredom.

OBITUARY.

It is with regret that we have to report the death of Mrs. J. Latter, R.R.C., which took place suddenly at her house, Sunderland Lodge, Westbourne Gardens. Mrs. Latter was trained at St. Bartholomew's Hospital and, prior to her marriage, was Matron of Chelsea Infirmary.

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