

nurses? That is so, sometimes. I think some confusion arises from the fact that an imaginary value is ascribed to the certificate. You consider then that uncertificated probationers are sometimes more versed in nursing than certificated nurses? Very often. You do not think that the system of putting certificated nurses under the charge of uncertificated ones causes friction?—I never had a case of it. Of course, the one who is acting as sister must be the superior." Now, my lords, as to the question of legal fitness. Lord Hannen put it to me, what I have never concealed from myself, that so far as the Members of the Association are concerned they of course can get on the register; but we have to deal with persons who are not members, and on that point I wish to call attention to page 757 of the second report. There, Dr. Fenwick is being examined. "Suppose I wrote to you to tell you that Nurse So and So had been drunk on a certain occasion on duty, would a communication of that sort be actionable?—We should ask you to be good enough to verify your words."

What verification would you ask for?—We should ask you to be good enough to give us the opportunity of acting legally upon it.

Then it would render me liable to an action if the thing were not exactly proved?—We should take it for granted that you would be able to prove your statement.

Then Earl Cathcart put a suppositious case and the answer is, "That is a difficulty; but we should hope the public would, for its own sake, tell us the facts and be willing to support their statements."

Again, looking at the report, I find in paragraph 512, the Committee say: "A point very strongly urged is that the character of the woman herself is a most essential matter in regard to a Nurse; much more so in the case of a Nurse than a Doctor. The Association professes to require evidence of character (by production of recent testimonials) before it will put a Nurse on its Register, and to register only women who have had three years hospital training, but it appears that women are registered who have not completed their full period of training at any one hospital, and of whom it is not known whether they have proved themselves competent or otherwise. The Association complains that a hospital certificate, once given, cannot be withdrawn, whereas a name will be removed from the register whenever a Nurse is proved to have forfeited her good character, legal proof being admittedly exceedingly difficult. But is evident that this course cannot be taken except on clear proof of actual crime or misconduct, and therefore it is no protection to the public from mere incompetency. It was admitted that a woman might go through three years' training at a hospital, and get her certificate, and yet be a very indifferent nurse, and be known at the hospital to be so; but the public who read her name in the register would not understand that it did not guarantee the efficiency of its Nurses. On the other hand, if the Association disclaims responsibility for the efficiency of the Nurses whom it registers, it seems difficult to understand wherein lies the security which it offers to the public."

My lords, upon that I ask whether the Association is not responsible for the efficiency of its members. Obviously, if it is as I have read, then the Chartered Register would not be sufficient, because so far from saying so, they actually say that they are not responsible for the hospital training of the Nurses, but they say that they have carefully examined the credentials of every applicant, and have power to remove from the register every Nurse who, after full inquiry, may prove not to possess the necessary qualifications. They put themselves forward then as vouching

for the trustworthiness of the Nurses they put on the register. I have now to call your lordship's attention to another great defect, so far as the constitution of this Association is concerned, and with reference to the persons who are in the Charter, to be its members. Look at page 6 of the proposed Charter. They propose that the only members shall be medical practitioners and nurses." My lords, that excludes, without exception perhaps, persons who know as much or more about nursing than the members, without the training of the schools and the hospitals. There are many lay members, and managers and members of training committees who have given much of their time to this work, and who have gathered much experience. They are of opinion, and it is the opinion of those who instruct me, and who certainly have the right to ask your lordships to give weight to their views—they are of opinion that in the matter of the training of Nurses the experience gained by the lay managers, apart from mere questions of medical knowledge (which the doctor would have) would be of the greatest service in judging what Nurses are equipped properly with all that is essential for carrying on their profession. Now, what is the state of the case? In London, there are 12 hospitals which have training schools attached to them. Giving my learned friend's clients every case in which they have even a partial support, not attempting to divide the support where it is not unanimous, assuming even that partial support means unanimous support, there are four hospitals supporting my learned friend, and eight opposing him. I am not going into the argument about the number of beds, but even here he has only 184 beds for, as contrasted with 2751 against. So that by no means can it be suggested that the institutions having the most experience in the training of nurses are supporting this movement. If we go to the provincial hospitals, we find seven supporting the petition against eleven opposing it, and in the case of the seven there is included also those who give only a partial support, for in many instances, distinguished members of the body are against it. It amounts to this, my lord, speaking of it as a profession; there are thirty large nurse training institutions of which nineteen are opposed to this register, as against eleven which wholly or in part are in favour of it, while there are 6,000 beds included in the nineteen institutions against 2,622 in the remaining eleven. Therefore, not only is the support not that of a majority of the persons interested, but they are to be excluded from the governing body, who ask by this Charter to be constituted into the authoritative representatives of the nurses. They would exclude all those ladies and gentlemen who from their experience and knowledge in connection with the training schools would be most competent to assist in determining what was a proper qualification for Nurses. Nor is this only an accidental omission, for, as I read to your lordships, I think the object of the Association is, that the control of the Nurses' profession should be in the hands of medical men and Nurses. That, therefore, is a point on which we are entitled to address you, because it is part of the constitution in the Charter. It will create a body which cannot be altered, which no bye-law can alter if the Charter passes as it stands. Under those circumstances, the governing body, the members from whom the majority of the governing body is chosen, would be entirely, or in a great majority, nurses. The nurses would thus be governing themselves, without any outside direction or guidance. There is another point with regard to this qualification which will show your lordships the extreme importance of preventing any institution from either directly or indirectly suggesting that its nurses are

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