

thing V.A.D.s can do if they wish to take up nursing as a profession, is to enter at the beginning and get the training. What we have to aim at is a high standard for the future. If you take into the nursing profession now a large number of women who have not got the basic training you will just set the clock back, and I beg your Lordships to support the Government to resist the Amendments which are put down in the name of Lord Craigmyle for insertion in the Bill in Committee. Speaking as a person of considerable medical experience, most important not to allow anything to be done that will mortgage the future standard of nursing in Scotland.

Viscount Elibank said he was sorry to have had to listen to a speech of the kind just made by Lord Geddes, because I know he carries great weight in these matters on account of his experience and former association with the medical profession. After all nurses who have shown a sense of duty because they believed in the nursing profession, and have given not only their time but everything, ought not to be flung incontinently away, as suggested by my noble friend Lord Geddes in his speech.

Lord Geddes: What I suggested was that they should now undergo training.

Viscount Elibank: My whole contention is that the experience they have had during this war should be taken into account, and they should be admitted to this register. I think the most grave injustice will be done to the V.A.D.s and to the Auxiliary Nursing Services if this Bill passes through Parliament in its present state.

Lord Alness stated he would defer his reply to the speeches until the Committee Stage was reached.

On question. Bill read a Second time and committed to a Committee of the Whole House.

THURSDAY, JULY 8th, 1943.

On July 8th, Lord Alness moved, That the House do now resolve itself into committee. This was agreed. Lord Alness accepted an amendment moved by Lord Craigmyle to make it clear that hospitals provided and managed by the Department of Health in Scotland may be used for the purpose of training Assistant Nurses. In reply to Lord Rushcliffe, Lord Alness stated that the Secretary of State had made arrangements to secure that the training requirements of the General Nursing Council for Scotland are complied with in these hospitals.

Roll Merely Temporary.

Lord Craigmyle asked why the Roll should be set up in the Bill and then be treated as purely temporary, being closed after five years. He moved the deletion of this sub-section which made the roll of Assistant Nurses purely temporary "unless Parliament shall hereinafter otherwise determine."

Viscount Elibank supported the Amendment. He stated "so far as I can see this particular sub-section almost obliterates the whole object of the Bill."

Lord Kinnaird: From all the information I am able to get, the Roll of Assistant Nurses will be of very great value. There will be a very great demand for Assistant Nurses, both for private nursing and in hospitals. They will be as valuable five years hence as they are to-day, and I hope the noble Lord will see his way not to limit the period.

Lord Alness repeated his explanation why this provision was found in the Bill, and why it took this particular shape, and why, after an explanation by the Secretary of State in another place (House of Commons) the Amendment was negatived. "If I may express a personal opinion"—Lord Alness continued—"I would say that to my mind it seemed difficult to justify taking a step of this kind which might have direct and unpleasant repercussions upon the State registered nurses of this country at a time when they

are scattered all over the world doing war service and without their voices being heard upon the subject. My Committee, on the evidence which was tendered to them, declined to favour the setting up of a Roll of Assistant Nurses."

Meantime the English Bill was introduced. It contained a justification for a Roll of Assistant Nurses, and is now on the Statute Book.

Lord Alness explained the reasons for the insertion of the limitation of the term, five years, for the enrolment of Assistant Nurses in Scotland. It was a compromise with those who objected to setting up the roll of Assistant Nurses in Scotland to which the Secretary of State had agreed, there being an acute conflict of opinion upon this somewhat combustible topic, and he pressed "your Lordships' House to abstain from disturbing this compromise." Lord Craigmyle ultimately withdrew his amendment, "not because my noble friend has convinced me."

There followed a long discussion on the use of the title "nurse" and the penalties for using it, from which children's "nannies" had been exempted.

The Use of the Title of Nurse.

Lord Craigmyle moved to insert at the end of sub-section (1) (d) "Nothing in this subsection shall prevent a person while actually employed in nursing covered by Section 2 (2) (a) of this Act from taking or using the name or title of nurse so long as such employment continues." He pleaded that Red Cross Nurses, V.A.D.s, Mobile V.A.D.s, mostly in military and naval hospitals, who answer to the name of "Nurse"—should not be penalised by having to pay the fierce penalty imposed in the Bill. "I do not think it is good enough in the constitutional sense," he said, "that Parliament should create a class of potential criminals" and leave it to the Executive that, "you are good people and will not be fined fifty pounds."

Amendment moved.

Lord Alness stated that the Secretary of State appreciates the point Lord Craigmyle had made and has agreed to give it very full consideration, and when adjusting the regulations in question to look into the claims of V.A.D.s and Nursing Auxiliaries to be allowed to use the term "Nurse."

Amendment by leave withdrawn.

Clause 14.

"Training of an Assistant Nurse to be Reckoned Towards Period of Training for Admission to Register."

An animated debate took place on Clause 14.

Lord Craigmyle moved that as a War measure the General Nursing Council should take into consideration the experience gained by certain Red Cross and Auxiliary and Assistant Nurses in the practical nursing of the sick and wounded over a period of years, and leave all matter of detail entirely to the General Nursing Council—in-accidentally, Lord Craigmyle paid a warm tribute of admiration to the work of skilled fully qualified Registered Nurses to whom the nation owes a great debt of gratitude for work at home and abroad. Their attitude towards V.A.D.s is encouraging, but I have never met a single skilled Nursing Sister who thought it would be proper to admit upon the State Register those who have not, in fact, the necessary standard of knowledge and who have not passed the necessary examination.

We read Lord Craigmyle's long and eloquent speech in support of remission of time for V.A.D.s, Red Cross Nurses, Auxiliaries and others with interest, but remain unconvinced.

The Point at Issue.

Lord Geddes: The point at issue has not been touched on. The women referred to in this clause are those who are to be admitted to the Register of State nurses. This clause does not stop them being Assistant Nurses. The whole point is, who is entitled, and by what method

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