

and shall consist of physicians, surgeons, and trained nurses.

61. The Consultative Board shall be elected by the Council from amongst physicians, surgeons, trained nurses, and persons interested in the relations between nurses and the public.

66. The Examination Board shall be elected by the Council from persons experienced in lecturing or teaching in nursing schools, or from physicians or surgeons on the staff of hospitals to which nursing schools are attached.

The fundamental wrong done to the nursing profession in this scheme, which has been secretly drawn up, and placed before the Board of Trade, is that nurses have no voice in the election of the Council which shall govern them. We go no further than this, because this fact cuts at the root of all just and good government. The seven signatories may be inspired by the most philanthropic motives. We do not doubt it. They may perhaps select the most desirable persons to sit on the Council; but this does not alter the fact that the nurses who are to be governed by that Council have no voice in its election, and that it holds office by the will of the signatories, not by that of the nurses themselves. It is this point which we must drive home.

The article by Miss C. J. Wood, in the current issue of *Nursing Notes*, in support of the proposed Society is not convincing, for after reading it we find that the above fundamental objection of the nursing world to this scheme still remains, inasmuch as *there is no provision for the direct representation on its governing body of the nurses themselves*. The persons appointed on to the Council by the signatories may be the best who could be found in the three kingdoms, but unless they take their seats as the direct representatives of the nurses, and are placed there by their vote, they will not be acceptable, because the principle on which they are appointed is an unjust and dangerous one. Whether the choice of members is wise or unwise, the Council is an autocracy, and domination by it means the enslavement of the Nursing Profession. This being so, we must fight the scheme to the death, and although "certain people" believe that it would solve the difficulties which at present confront us, that belief is ill-founded. We have no hesitation in saying that if persisted in it will prove an apple of discord, which will cause the sharpest possible division in our ranks.

Nor do we think that even with a nominated Council the promoters of the scheme will be able to secure the services of those who will command the confidence of the nursing profession. They are not to be found amongst those who have stood aside while the hard work has been done, and at the eleventh hour are willing to reap the fruit of the labours of others. Neither does Miss Wood's statement that "there is no further need to consult

the nurses, they have been consulted for the past fifteen or twenty years," commend itself to us. When the history of the organisation of nursing in this country comes to be written it will be found that the fight made by the nurses for their professional liberties has been a splendid one, probably the most splendid that any body of women workers has ever made, our American colleagues not excepted, and one in which all the tenacity of purpose with which the British people are justly credited has been requisitioned. In the United States the opposition to the registration of nurses has been soon overcome, whereas, in this country the struggle has been most protracted. But British nurses when foiled in one attempt have courageously formed fresh societies to accomplish their purpose, and never have the results of their hard work seemed more promising than at the present time.

Is it fair, is it just, is it British that they should be expected to submit themselves to the constitution of a society under which their part is to find the requisite funds while they are absolutely excluded from a voice in its control?

As we have said, the nominated Council may be composed of admirable persons, but the manner of its appointment is a fatal fault. Liberty to elect those who govern them is what nurses ask for, and they will be satisfied with no less. As the great apostle of Russian liberty exclaims with Dryden—

"Oh, give me liberty! for even were Paradise my prison, still I should long to leap the crystal walls."

One more word of wisdom from the same authority. Miss Wood regrets that the effect of the publicity given to nursing matters in the course of the hearing of the Select Committee has been to emphasise "the division, the want of harmony, the antagonism" in the nursing world. Nevertheless, "if we want to get an understanding of things as they are we must turn over the muck heap of things as they used to be."

The following letter, which admirably embodies the reasons against the incorporation of the Society for Promoting the Higher Education and Training of Nurses, has been addressed by Miss Isla Stewart to each of the seven signatories to its Memorandum of Association:—

Sir,—I have been invited to sit on the Committee of a Society for Promoting the Higher Education and Training of Nurses, which you and six other gentlemen are asking the Board of Trade to incorporate. On consideration I find I cannot accept this invitation for reasons which I think well to lay before you, and which are probably similar to those of many of the Matrons of London hospitals who have also declined your invitation. I have for many years been President of the Matrons' Council of Great Britain and Ireland, which has for one of its objects the pro-

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