

tentative legislation, arose the new order of things that culminates for good and evil in the style of legislation to which we are becoming accustomed to-day, and of which this Insurance Bill is the latest, but, most people think, not the final development.

Whilst all the centuries have admitted in theory the axiom that humanity in need has a claim on humanity at ease, it has remained for this age to carry out that axiom to its absolutely logical conclusion. Past ages have agreed that it was an act of charity and grace voluntarily to give of your abundance or your sufficiency to help those who were in want, and a stream of wealth, now wider, now narrower, has incessantly flowed from those who have to those who have not. Indeed, philanthropy has to-day become almost feverish in its desire to meet any and every claim upon it.

But the power of combination was re-discovered, and from small beginnings arose the Trades Unions, which by formidable numbers made the now popular phrase "collective bargaining" possible, gaining for the manual labourers of the world better wages, times of duty and so forth.

The desire to have some fixed security against mischance and disease led to the growth and rapid expansion of the great Friendly Societies and Clubs, founded entirely by thrift and foresight. The modern great democratic movement began; with the advent of a powerful Labour Party in Parliament the machinery was complete.

Simultaneously with these developments on the part of labour, it has become the accepted maxim of modern government to tax the wealth of a nation heavily to provide the benefits of civilization for those who are unable or unwilling to provide them for themselves; also that Government has the right to force people for their own good to accept such benefits whether they do or do not desire them.

Hence arose the Education Act, Compulsory Education with all the schemes in connection with it, the Factory Act, the Notification of Diseases and the huge fever hospitals that dot the land, Compulsory Vaccination, various sanitary measures, Workmen's Compensation Act, Old Age Pensions, and many others. Last, but not least, the Act that lies before us to-day. A hundred years ago a Government that attempted to impose compulsory taxes for such purposes as are enumerated within this bulky document would have been deemed insane, but to-day such laws are accepted, though with great repugnance by many, as being perfectly natural.

NURSES AND THE NATIONAL INSURANCE BILL.

A meeting of the Nurses' Protection Committee was held to consider the National Insurance Bill at 431, Oxford Street, London, on Thursday, November 2nd.

It was reported that all the ladies invited had consented to join the committee, and that the 22 members were thoroughly representative of nursing interests.

A Memorial had been drafted by the Committee and forwarded to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and subsequently acknowledged.

Through the appeal in the *THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING* £7 11s. had been received, £4 11s. 4d. spent, leaving a balance in hand of £2 19s. 8d.

The committee agreed to an amendment to Clause 17, and to a resolution supporting the demand for the representation of Trained Nurses on the Advisory Committee to be formed by the Insurance Commissioners. It was agreed to invite the co-operation of Societies interested in nursing legislation, in support of the claims presented in the following letter to the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Nurses' Protection Committee,

431, Oxford Street, London, W.

*To the Right Hon. David Lloyd George, M.P.,
D.C.L., LL.D., Chancellor of the Exchequer.*

SIR,—I have the honour to forward for your consideration an amendment to Clause 17 of the National Insurance Bill, unanimously approved as urgently necessary by the Trained Nurses' Protection Committee, at a meeting held at 431, Oxford Street, London, on Thursday, November 2nd.

Amendment.

To insert, on page 16 in Clause 17, of the National Insurance Bill, the words "fully trained" in line 32 before the words "district nurses," and also in line 33 after the word "appoint" and before "nurses."

The Committee was of opinion that insured persons have as much right to a State guarantee concerning the qualifications of nurses, for whose services they are compelled to subscribe, as they have to the guarantees afforded them, through the respective State Registers, of the qualifications prescribed for their medical attendants and midwives.

Pending the passing of the Nurses' Registration Bill, in charge of the Right Hon. R. C. Munro Ferguson, which has been before Parliament every Session since 1904, and the need for which is every day becoming more apparent and urgent, the Committee considered that the insertion of the words "fully trained" in relation to nurses is essential for the protection of insured persons who may need their services.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)