

SOCIETY FOR STATE REGISTRATION OF NURSES.

A meeting of the Executive Committee of the Society for State Registration of Trained Nurses, at which the presence of members was invited, was held at 431, Oxford Street, London, W., on Saturday, March 18th, at 4.30 p.m., Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, President, in the chair.

Before the beginning of the meeting, Miss M. Heather-Bigg, President of the Matrons' Council, asked Mrs. Fenwick's acceptance of a most lovely bouquet of flowers, carried out in the national colours in iris, crimson tulips, and white lilies, freezias, and narcissus, tied with a wide bow of ribbon of the national colours.

THE GIFT.

Miss Heather-Bigg said:—

"MRS. FENWICK,—This meeting affords us the opportunity of expressing to you as President of the Society for State Registration of Trained Nurses, and Hon. Editor of its official organ—*THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING*—our warm appreciation of your continuous labours for the cause which you initiated.

"It is only recently that we have learnt through the newspapers a fact about which you have kept silent, namely, that you and Dr. Bedford Fenwick have spent £10,000 upon the campaign for justice and legal status for nurses.

"We take this opportunity of assuring you of our gratitude and appreciation of all you have both done to uplift the nursing profession.

"We recognise that by your sacrifices you have given us that voice in the press which is indispensable to all professions, and that in *THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING* the workers have an organ in which they can always freely express their opinions, and which has always maintained a high standard of professional integrity and literary merit.

"We assure you, dear Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, that you may depend upon our loyalty to you, as our leader, and to the cause for which you have worked and sacrificed so much.

"We welcome this opportunity of expressing to you the gratitude for your invaluable services to the nursing profession, which are recognised, not only by those who know and trust you in this country, but all over the civilized world."

THE ACCEPTANCE.

In reply, Mrs. Fenwick said, "Miss Heather-Bigg and ladies,—I thank you warmly for these exquisite flowers, and I am much gratified that they are tied with our national colours. Your very kind words touch me deeply.

"I can assure you that the verdict in the High Courts will only make me all the more

vigilant in the defence of the nursing profession. It is impossible to fight privilege in an attempt to organize a body of women workers so defenceless as the nurses, without the expenditure of large sums of money. Men have not only spent money in attaining self-government, but blood has flowed freely as well—and men have political power and physical force to help them. We women have only mental and moral force, and the pen has been our most forceful weapon. As nurses learn to understand the value and the terrible power of money, they will realise that every advantage won by a class in the body politic must be paid for in hard cash. To have a voice in the press, without which we should have been crushed out long ago, is a very costly matter. In the past quarter of a century we have been up against the danger of monopoly many times, and we have through our *JOURNAL* successfully defended ourselves on every count.

"I am glad you have mentioned the part taken by Dr. Fenwick in financing for so many years a *JOURNAL* through which the best interests of the nursing profession may be advanced and protected. In this country, so sunk in soulless materialism, to pay for one's ideals appears the action of a fool, and is of course incomprehensible to those who exploit our profession. I will convey with pleasure your expression of appreciation to Dr. Fenwick for the part he has taken in the fight for the legal status of the nursing profession.

"But it is not only money which has been poured out in this now historic struggle of nearly thirty years' duration for the Legal Registration of Nurses. What of the devoted work, literally night and day, of Miss Breay and others, who have given of their fine literary talents to the upbuilding of our *JOURNAL* with a selfless generosity which can never be repaid? The £10,000 in cash is only part—an indispensable part I own—of what it has cost to convince the State of its duty to the trained nurses of this country. Let us hope that in the near future the profession as a whole may reap the firstfruits of the generosity and devotion of those who have borne the burden and heat of the day."

THE COLLEGE OF NURSING.

The special object of the meeting was to consider the Draft Memorandum and Articles of Association of the proposed College of Nursing in conjunction with the Nurses' Registration Bill, and they were carefully considered clause by clause, for the instruction of the delegate, preparatory to attending the Conference with the promoters of the College of Nursing on March 24th.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)