

by the thousand coming forward and claiming to be trained nurses, and when they did that they would do great injustice to the fully trained, and a much greater injustice to the community upon whom they practised.

The only way of meeting that difficulty was by legislation. The Nursing College, which would be a voluntary institution, would do nothing to meet that impending difficulty. No one would be obliged to register unless they liked, and practically no one would do so, because nothing could be given to nurses except by State enactment. That was what registrationists asked for nurses, and until they obtained it we were not one step forward in the direction of remedying the abuses to which he had referred.

The Central Committee believed that the dangers owing to lack of State Registration of Nurses had increased and would continue to do so. The matter was becoming more and more urgent and their supporters, as well as their opponents, agreed that something must be done, and done now. The question was whether all the contending parties could not arrive at agreement, and get now this State enactment which was essential. He was one of those who believed it could be got now, and he proceeded to state why.

During the last four years to his personal knowledge the promoters of the Bill had been in contact with the Prime Minister, Mr. McKenna, Mr. Samuel, and other Cabinet Ministers, as well as for many years before he had the honour of being connected with the Bill at all, and they had the specific promise of Mr. Asquith that if they could conciliate the opposition the Government would give facilities for the measure and help it through, and the position was therefore that the House of Lords had passed the Bill, the House of Commons was committed to the principle, and they had the promise of the Government that if they conciliated their opponents, and came with an agreed measure the Government would help them to get it through.

If the abuses facing them were going to increase, and they were, if the only remedy for these abuses was legislation, and if the promise of the Government was in their hands, why not all go and get the only thing that would give them the effective remedy they all so much desired?

THE ESSENTIAL FEATURES OF THE BILL.

That was the issue before them. He would now like to contrast the position of the parties, and see how it was possible to amalgamate the interests of both sides and get a resultant satisfactory to all. The Bill gave a Council, a democratic Council—a Council very largely in the hands of the nurses themselves. That had his sympathy. The nurses of the country should get a grip of the Council and hold that grip. He was sufficiently grounded in democratic principles to believe that the power should reside in the hands of the nurses of electing the Council and of turning it out if necessary. The Bill gave that—a Council in the hands of the

nurses and registration on a State Register. It had been proved that nothing else would give nurses the necessary status. At the same time if the Bill became law no one would be prohibited from nursing after the war. Every young woman could nurse whom she liked, where she liked, at what charges she liked. The Bill did not prevent a person nursing, but it did prevent her claiming to be a trained nurse. The Bill provided for a three years' curriculum, but the promoters were willing to strike that out and leave the definition of what constituted the curriculum to the Council. Those were the essential features of the Bill.

THE POSITION OF THE COLLEGE.

What was the position of the College? As he understood that, it would be a purely voluntary institution. It would give no status whatever to anyone who registered, and it would not prevent any one from claiming to be trained. If it were established to-morrow all girls now working as V.A.D.'s could still claim to be trained. On the other hand, the Bill gave a definition of training, and a status to those who attained the prescribed standard.

After the last meeting he had met Sir Charles Russell and had conferences with him on the subject. He had also consulted advisers in Parliament, and with a Parliamentary draughtsman, to ascertain how far the Memorandum of the College could be embodied in the Bill, because the College—so far as it postponed the day of getting State Registration—was a danger, and in the absence of a Bill it gave nothing.

With the aid of the draughtsman he had managed to incorporate the whole of the objects of the College, as set out in the Memorandum and Articles of Association, in the Bill. Thus if the Bill as re-drafted passed into law it would give all that the promoters of the College wanted, and, in addition, it would not be a voluntary institution dependent on a few promoters, but it would have State recognition at once, it would be a College owned by the nurses, having a Council elected by the nurses, and in their own hands, without the disadvantage of foregoing any advantages given by the Bill.

He could not understand what objection could be taken by any of the friends of the College to that proposal, because if it were adopted they would get their College, and it would have at once a legal status giving them a far better position than that of any voluntary institution.

The College as at present proposed might not be recognised by the nurses of the country. He was strongly of opinion that it would not be, and that they would not see in it anything giving them any advantage whatever. But here was a chance of placing it on a sound permanent basis. Why, then, should they not try to harmonise all the interests concerned, and go to the Government and say: "We have fulfilled the conditions you have laid down, we have conciliated our opponents, we come here representing the whole mass of the profession, and we ask you to fulfil

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