

GOVERNMENT BY CONSENT.

All free men are politically governed by consent, otherwise they would be serfs. These citizens then take power by co-operation to compel the State to protect their economic condition and their educational technique. Thus free men rightly exercise personal responsibility in the body politic, and gain not only material advantage, but what is far more essential—the right to act according to their reasoned convictions.

Women do not count in politics; they have no vote; they are therefore politically dumb, and governed without consent. This deprivation of citizenship is deeply resented by thoughtful women. They are serfs, and no amount of silly platitudes will convince them to the contrary.

No class of skilled women workers have realised their political disabilities more poignantly than the Trained Nurses of the United Kingdom. For a quarter of a century they have worked, pleaded, and paid for Legal Status on a self-governing basis, and by evasion and subterfuge they have been refused their right to self-government through an Act of Parliament, by the influence of those who employ their services.

But step by step they have by their labour and earnest conviction convinced the liberal-minded members of the medical profession, thoughtful women in co-operation, the just-minded members of the public generally, the House of Lords, and the overwhelming majority of the House of Commons, that their skilled work is of national value, and that they deserve their Professional Enfranchisement—that is, that the Nurses' Registration Bill, providing for an elected body of professional persons to regulate their Qualifications and Registration—that is, a Nursing Council to govern the Nursing Profession as the General Medical Council (empowered by the Medical Acts) governs the Medical Profession—is urgently required to protect both the public and Trained Nurses, and that such a beneficial measure should be passed into law.

A BOLT FROM THE BLUE.

Then, in spite of this consensus of considered opinion, what happens?

Without any request from the organized members of the Nursing Profession whose convictions have convinced the proletariat, and who have, indeed, protested strongly by resolution against their proposal, seven laymen, who know nothing about nursing conditions or

nurses' organizations, form themselves into a Limited Liability Company to **Govern the Nursing Profession**. Knowing the strong objections to their proposal, these gentlemen dare not apply to the Board of Trade to omit the word "limited," thus obtaining the status of a non-trading Company, because they feared the reasoned objections which the organized nurses' Societies were prepared to make against the Memorandum and Articles of Association of the College of Nursing, Ltd., objections which defeated the Scheme in 1905. The seven laymen then proceeded to **nominate** a Council of Management for the Nursing Profession, composed almost entirely of hospital officials, which can re-nominate itself for election for time immemorial. This is called Self-Government for the profession by these lay Governors of the profession! Such a Constitution, autocratic and pernicious to the highest degree, means Government without Consent, and I for one do not intend to be governed professionally by any Limited Liability Company of Laymen and their nominees.

This College of Nursing Company, Ltd., deprives the nursing profession as a whole of any power of self-government whatever. It means coercion for its members by hospital committees and hospital officials; it means professional and personal degradation and subjection—and we will not submit to it.

We are glad to know there are hundreds of trained nurses who realise the danger of this Nursing College Constitution, which would be grotesque if it were not an outrage to the intelligence and conscience of every convinced State Registrationist.

We have got to be very firm at this crisis. The best interests of the sick public, of intelligent trained nurses to-day and in the future, and of the medical profession, are all at stake in this question. We are going to fight for those interests **now**, and in the future, as we have done in the past, and we are going to ask all courageous nurses, women, and medical men to support our righteous cause.

THE SOUL AND SPIRIT OF NURSING.

Much more is at stake than the material welfare of the nursing profession—the very Soul and Spirit of Nursing are at stake; we are going to keep the Soul and Spirit of our work alive.

THE ONLY WAY.

The State must deal justly with Trained Nurses. Their work at all times, and especially during this heart-breaking war, is of the greatest national value. The State must be made to appreciate and reward that work.

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