

on January 15th, to discuss the Letter sent to the Chairmen of hospitals, at which it was agreed to ask Mr. Stanley and his advisers to receive representatives of the Committee and to afford them further information concerning the scheme. This interview took place on March 2nd, when a Memorandum was presented on Legal or Voluntary Registration (upon which we were highly complimented by the Chairman—Lord Ampthill), and at which we complained that, having achieved so much for registration by the State we had the anomaly of a Voluntary Scheme being put forward without consultation with the Central Committee; and that we were asked seriously to accept it in substitution for legal registration under a Bill carefully drafted, debated, amended and accepted by medical and nursing associations which have been considering the problems concerned in registration for the last quarter of a century. The last clause of this Memorandum expressed the hope that the Committee which had launched the Voluntary Scheme would co-operate with those who had worked so long and earnestly to obtain the organization of the nursing profession through State Registration—a statesmanlike course, which would command the respect and approval alike of the medical and nursing professions, of Parliament and the public.

In a lengthy discussion which followed, your President supported the proposal that the Nurses' Registration Bill might be taken as the basis of discussion; I urged that the Voluntary College Scheme would not satisfy those women who had been working for so many years to organize the profession. There were hundreds who would not come in if they were not to have legal status, or any economic protection. Almost the whole professional opposition would be eliminated if those supporting the two schemes could arrive at an agreed Bill. The representatives of the Central Committee present were trustees of the interests of a large number of nurses. I asked if our Bill was to go into the waste paper basket? It was agreed to consult the Parliamentary draftsmen in the hope of drafting a comprehensive scheme. Ultimately, after a lengthened discussion, Mr. Stanley agreed to another conference in three weeks' time—on March 24th—to consider such a Bill.

Before that date the Memorandum and Articles of the Nursing College were circulated, and you may imagine the surprise of your President to find that it was almost word for word the old scheme for the "Higher Education and Training of Nurses" put forward by Guy's Hospital in 1905, and opposed successfully by a huge consensus of professional opinion before the Board of Trade, when it applied for incorporation without the word "limited." Pigeonholed for eleven years this scheme, under a new title and with a few new suggestions and verbal alterations, was again offered to the nursing profession as a panacea for all the ills from which it suffers.

The next Conference took place on March 24th, some fifty to sixty people were present. It was

therefore hopeless to discuss the clauses of the Bill seriatim as prepared by the Parliamentary draftsmen. Mr. Stanley said the former conferences had had to be carried on without the scheme being in front of the meeting, and he thought it would be the best procedure to ask for such criticisms as had suggested themselves. As this was not the purpose for which the meeting was convened, Dr. McGregor Robertson (Scottish Nurses' Association) proposed that the Conference should reaffirm their belief in what they considered the vitals, the essentials, the fundamentals of any scheme for State Registration of Nurses. After exhaustive discussion the following resolution was passed with two dissentients:—

"That this meeting affirms as the basis of any agreement the necessity of (1) State Registration; (2) Uniform curriculum; (3) A one-portal examination after such period of training as may be found desirable."

A proposal by Major Chapple to form a Committee to draw up a Bill for presentation to Parliament embodying State Registration and the establishment of a Nursing College was ruled out of order by the Chair—until after the formation of the College of Nursing.

Your President pointed out that when the Nursing College was first launched notice was given that the promoters intended to apply for leave to become incorporated without the word "Limited," but now that it was to be merely a Limited Liability Company the nurses would have no opportunity of opposing it before the Board of Trade. The scheme gave nurses no legal status, no protected title, nor anything they had been working for and paying for all these years. It was a subterfuge and must be opposed.

Three days later the Voluntary Nursing College was incorporated by the Board of Trade as a Limited Liability Company, the seven signatories being laymen who know little of nursing organisation or politics, and who proceeded to appoint a Council of nominated medical men and Matrons with power to add to their number, to govern the nursing profession.

Mr. Stanley, as Chairman of this Council, then invited representatives of the Central Committee to meet representatives of the Nursing College to discuss the possibility of an agreed Bill. The Central Committee accepted the invitation if the Nurses' Registration Bill was to be the draft for discussion. This was agreed. These delegates met on May 19th, when a suggestion was put forward from the Chair that a Governing Body for 50,000 to 60,000 trained nurses should consist of 12 persons, 3 to be appointed by the Privy Council, 3 by the General Medical Council and 6 by the College of Nursing. This could not be entertained. We refused to discuss it. (Cheers.)

We then considered the constitution of the General Nursing Council as drafted in our Bill, when a long and somewhat heated discussion took place on the right of the Nursing Profession as a

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