

What was apparent to a few clear-thinking people thirty years ago had now been brought home to those who had formerly opposed the proposal, and they had drafted a Bill for the State Registration of Nurses, but those who had been working so long to obtain just legislation were not going to see any Bill placed in the Statute Book which did not incorporate the basic principles included in the Bill drafted by the pioneers.

A College was an academic body. They needed that very much to co-ordinate nursing education, but they wanted also something more. They wanted legislation in accordance with the demands of their professional conscience. The great majority of Matrons were now convinced of the necessity for registration, but legislation must be effective. When registrationists were told at the beginning of the year that it was proposed to organise the nursing profession through a voluntary system they knew it could not be done.

Mrs. Fenwick then described the line of action taken by the registrationists who had been watching from outside the movement for organisation through the College of Nursing, Ltd. Representatives of the Central Committee for the State Registration of Nurses had met those of the College and discussed the Nurses' Registration Bill and agreed on some fundamental principles. Then the College of Nursing drafted a Bill. The first draft was one which could not for a moment be accepted. The idea seemed to be that to get a Bill through Parliament it must contain nothing of either educational or economic value. Then negotiations took place between two or three persons on both sides with the object of bringing the two Bills into agreement, and owing to the courtesy and sympathy of Mr. Stanley Mrs. Fenwick thought that when the Central Committee met again the representatives of the various societies interested would think that progress towards agreement had been made.

She considered the political situation fairly hopeful. It would have been mischievous to circulate the first Bill, as the fifth edition was much better. If the advisers of the College agreed to the amendments proposed, then when the Bill was printed she hoped it would be widely circulated so that the nursing profession at large might express its opinion upon it. The National Union of Trained Nurses had its delegates upon the Central Committee, and they should not permit any Bill to pass into law without serious consideration.

As the time allotted to the consideration of this subject had come to an end, the Chairman closed the discussion, and during an interval tea was most hospitably provided, and informal discussion of the subject continued over the teacups.

We shall conclude the report of this Conference next week, but may here state that the feeling of the meeting was in favour of a Conference in the autumn, convened conjointly by the National Council of Trained Nurses of Great Britain and

Ireland and the National Union of Trained Nurses at which important nursing questions could be discussed.

(To be concluded.)

THE COLLEGE OF NURSING, LIMITED.

During the controversy which has taken place since the College of Nursing scheme has been before the nursing profession and which must be judged not by intentions but by its printed Memorandum and Articles of Association, it has been keenly criticised by the nurses' societies associated to obtain the organisation of the nursing profession by Act of Parliament, and in our opinion the criticisms have been reasoned, well controlled and, as events have proved, effectual.

The leaflet issued by the Society for the State Registration of Nurses for the information of the nursing profession, based on the printed Memorandum of the College, has been widely read, by the wise to their enlightenment and by those who are not wise with resentment.

Now that we are all living in hope that the Central Committee for State Registration and the Nursing College may come to agreement on a Nurses' Registration Bill and combine to have it made law, we have no hesitation in expressing the opinion that had Mr. Stanley, who launched the College scheme, taken the attitude a less generous man might have done and resented or ignored the expression of expert opinion upon the part of the nurses' organisations the present hopeful position would never have been attained.

A word, therefore, in the ear of those members of the College Council who, having accepted office, are inclined to assume the attitude that criticism of the present constitution of the College by their colleagues is somewhat superfluous if not heretical.

Because we have stated emphatically that we, as professional women, object to the organisation of the nursing profession by a limited liability company of laymen, to being governed by a nominated council, to having nursing educational and registration standards defined by such an authority without discussion or consent, and indeed to being denied the use of our reasoning faculties, we are told we are "abusing the College" and we are "not giving it a fair chance."

This is nonsense.

Those who control the destinies of the College of Nursing have been quick to grasp the fact that once the fundamental principles, for which clear-thinking nurses have been working with the utmost self-sacrifice for years, have been accepted by them, and a revised constitution adopted by Parliament, criticism will have attained its object and harmony may result.

We registrationists impugn the integrity of no one in this controversy, though we may fail to approve their judgment. For ourselves we shall continue to exercise the reasoning faculties with which we have been endowed, and upon all counts Mandarinism will be gently and firmly resisted.

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