

principle of good government to the nurses on the Provisional Council, so the Central Committee pursued the dignified course of reaffirming its decision and determined to proceed with its own just Bill, drafted six years before the College of Nursing, Limited, cut across its bows.

A CONJOINT BILL, BUT NOT ABSORPTION.

The Central Committee was willing to negotiate in the hope of agreeing on a *conjoint* Bill, but it is quite determined not to be absorbed by the College Bill, and permit the professional disfranchisement of all the Nurses' Societies which have worked and paid for legislative reform, some of them for a quarter of a century. The present College Council excludes the nursing profession from *direct* representation, and is apparently determined, if possible, to pursue its autocratic policy by Act of Parliament.

In the above letter, signed by the whole Council, it urges trained nurses to place their names on its voluntary register, and incidentally to supply the funds for their own subjection.

DEMOCRACY IN THE FUTURE.

(1) It pleads with them to join the College, pay for the conduct of business, and in the dim and distant future "the scheme will be placed upon the democratic basis to which it is our desire to attain."

PLEDGING PARLIAMENT.

(2) The College Bill makes the existing Register compiled on a variety of standards, without consulting the profession, the first Legal Register, under which the nurses will proceed themselves to appoint their representatives upon the Permanent Council *so soon as the Provisional Council has finished its task of framing the rules under which the Act is to be carried out.* (The italics are ours).

Exactly! Trained nurses are being persuaded to pay for voluntary registration upon a promise which pledges Parliament! It is not improbable that Parliament may object to being pledged and will not incorporate the Council of a Limited Liability Company as the Statutory Governing Body of the Nursing Profession—if there is strong opposition to establishing such a precedent.

We hope trained nurses realise the fact that they are to be kept off the Provisional Council set up by Act of Parliament until it "has finished its task (self-imposed) of framing the rules" which the registered nurses will have to obey! No more insolent assumption of authority over a body of professional women has ever been propounded. The letter is as tactless as it is unjustifiable, and proves how entirely out of touch with progressive nursing thought are the promoters of the College Company. It is this self-sufficient and obtuse attitude towards the rank and file of the profession which would be amusing if it were not so intolerable.

MARTYRS TO THE CAUSE.

That these unenfranchised nurses should now be appealed to "to sustain the Council in the prolonged struggle that lies before them in their endeavour to gain for nurses the legal recognition and professional status which they have so long desired" cannot really be read without a smile when we realise that quite a number of these self-appointed champions have for years fought tooth and nail, in season and out of season, and signed every anti-registration manifesto extant, to prevent the trained nurses of the United Kingdom obtaining the "legal recognition" for which they have pleaded, worked and paid, with such untiring devotion, and whose self-sacrifice had brought State Registration within the sphere of practical politics before the College scheme was launched to reap the result of their labours. This is an aspect of the case which is severely criticised by many honourable people.

THE POLICY OF THE COLLEGE.

The position is simple and now clearly defined. The College Council stubbornly refuses to provide in its Bill for the *direct* representation of the Nursing Profession on the Provisional Council which is to frame the Rules to which the registered nurses will have to conform.

THE POLICY OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE.

The Central Committee is determined to safeguard the nurses' interests by providing for such *direct* representation on their Governing Body, and from the inception of the Act, so that they may help to draft the rules they will have to obey, and that such safeguards shall be inserted in any Bill to which it agrees.

As the matter stands now, both the Central Committee and the College will proceed to support their own Bills, and needless to say the self-governing Nurses' Societies intend to enter upon an energetic political campaign to protect trained nurses from any form of legislation by which they will be governed by their employers without consent. Those who realise the disastrous results of such subjection should join the Society for State Registration of Trained Nurses, founded in 1902, and help to prevent the Prussianisation of the Nursing Profession. It was this Society which drafted the First Nurses' Registration Bill in 1904, which defeated the employers' Nurses Directory Bill in 1908, which drafted the Bill introduced into the House of Lords by Lord Ampthill in 1908, which was passed with the support of the Government without a division at any stage; and which also took the initiative in opposing and defeating the dangerous Scheme for the Higher Education of Nurses at the Board of Trade in 1905, the constitution of which was almost identical with that of the College of Nursing Limited. This Society has proved its power of initiative and construction, and its fighting force, and it is determined that no Bill calculated to submerge the Nursing Profession shall become law without its most strenuous opposition.

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