

infirmary as against 40 beds for other hospitals still remained, with the condition of a Resident Medical and Surgical Officer, or recognition would be refused. This would involve possible damage to many hundreds of nurses in the Poor Law Service. As a result of correspondence on the 12th December the Association received a letter from the College authorities stating the regulations for the admission of nurses to the register had been revised in the sense desired by the National Poor Law Officers' Association. They had had many letters of appreciation of the action taken, and Mr. Symonds, of the Local Government Board, had sent him a letter for publication, as follows:—

"I fully appreciate the importance of the Poor Law nurses' question raised in your letter, and it seems to me that they have every right to look to the Local Government Board to safeguard their position in the event of legislation being introduced for the purpose of providing for State registration of nurses."

He thought that went further than the point they had raised. In his covering letter Mr. Symonds expressed the opinion that he did not think the Local Government Board could ever acquiesce in the statutory exclusion of nurses who had received certificates in Poor Law training schools recognised by his Department. The President then detailed the position taken up by the Poor-Law Unions' Association, which has been fully reported, and reminded the Committee that they had urged that body on the very initiation of the scheme to secure proper representation for the Poor-Law Service. Unfortunately, Mr. List was unable to be with them that day, but he asked for approval of his action in approaching the Poor-Law Unions' Association and also of his action for securing an amendment of the conditions of registration. He moved to that effect.

A DEADLOCK WITH THE COLLEGE.

Mr. J. A. Battersby seconded. He pointed out that negotiations with the College had now arrived at a deadlock. Whether they got representation on the College Council or not, what they had to do was to protect Poor Law nurses and the Poor Law Nursing Service, in order to secure for the sick poor undiminished nursing service despite any action of self-constituted bodies. There was much more in this scheme than ordinary trade or professional protection of workers. It was an attempt to deal with the whole question of hospital management in this country, and the scheme would not be supported at all without considerable modification. He would be content to leave the whole matter in the hands of the President, and in urging the Committee to adopt this course, said he wished it to be publicly known that if by any chance a nurse was prejudiced in promotion or by transfer because of her membership or support of this Association, they would go to any lengths to protect her. The danger was not illusory, and they were prepared to meet it.

The President's report was then agreed to unanimously.

THE SOUTH YORKSHIRE BRANCH.

At the annual general meeting of the South Yorkshire Branch, in the Union Offices, Sheffield, Mr. J. W. Flint, chairman of the Sheffield Guardians, said with regard to the question of the Royal College of Nursing, he believed that the title of it, like the constitution, had been altered several times, and he understood that the proposed Nurses' Registration Bill had also been drafted many times. But now they had got a brand new Council, and he was surprised to find that on that new Council the Poor Law was not directly represented. He congratulated the President on the stand he had taken on this question, and on the ability he had shown in bringing forward the claims of the Poor Law to recognition and representation on the Council. He was quite sure that the matter was safe in Mr. Percival's hands, and that he would never rest satisfied until the Poor-Law got proper representation.

BROKEN PLEDGES.

Mr. Percival reported at length on the College Scheme as it affected Poor-Law Nurses. As to the proportion of representation on the new Council of the College, the Association was apparently faced with the position that the pledges so definitely given to them in the past had been broken. Personally he was exceedingly loth to believe that. He felt they ought to trust Mr. Stanley and give him an opportunity of redeeming his pledges, which he believed Mr. Stanley would do. If the Association could not protect the interests of the Poor-Law Nurses on the Council of the College of Nursing, if need be they would protect them on the floor of the House of Commons. The Association could not allow, and did not intend to allow, any small section to stand in the way of the due protection of the interests of thousands of their colleagues. They had to recognise that amongst the Matrons of their hospitals there was a small group (very small, fortunately) whose opposition was due to snobishness. They were afraid and ashamed of their connection with the Poor-Law Service. Their attitude was absolutely wrong. If they would adopt the attitude of legitimate pride in their Service people would soon take them at their own valuation.

Although Lord Knutsford and Miss Lückes are opposed to the College of Nursing, Ltd., now that it has put a Bill for State Registration of Nurses on its programme, and have advised nurses trained at the London not to join, we learn that for the future the active anti-registration press campaign is not to be pushed. The London Hospital Committee realises that it laid them open to too much criticism on their Private Nurse Profits, and that under the indirect control of hospital committees the College scheme is far less dangerous to their absolute authority than the independent Governing Body advocated by the professional registrationists.

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