

by the statement of policy of the College. The change of policy is on the part of Sir Arthur, and not the Royal British Nurses' Association.

I submit, therefore, that the paragraph in the *Times* of December 26th, to which Sir Arthur Stanley takes exception, is an accurate statement of the case, namely, that the Supplemental Charter as amended by the Privy Council, made it possible to admit nurses who had not undergone the three years' training (*i.e.*, three years' training in a general hospital), which the Association considers essential to its members' interests.

May I point out as incidental evidence that some importance was attached to the alterations in Clause *b*, that although they were communicated to our solicitor by the Privy Council in March of last year, the knowledge of this was withheld from the Council of the R.B.N.A., owing to the action of a member of the Council of the College of Nursing, and it was only accidentally in July last that they were brought to the notice of the Council of the Association.

In conclusion, may I add that my Council strongly resents the insinuation that we have repudiated our agreement. The agreement for the amalgamation of the College of Nursing with the R.B.N.A. (not the R.B.N.A. with the College, as stated by Sir Arthur Stanley), was contingent on the Supplemental Charter being granted as agreed by the two bodies concerned. We failed to obtain the Supplemental Charter embodying the principles publicly endorsed by Sir Arthur Stanley himself, and for which this Association has been working for thirty years. To say, therefore, that the Association has repudiated its agreement is contrary to the truth.

I am, etc.,

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Medical Hon. Sec., R.B.N.A.

GOVERNMENT BY CONSENT.

Thanks largely to the energy of Miss Eden, the Nurses' point of view, as apart from their employers' on the Nursing College question, and criticism of its autocratic Constitution, and methods have appeared in several papers, and the *Yorkshire Post* has been very fair in handling correspondence. Recently a letter signed by two of the nominated members of the College Council—Miss Sparshott, Matron of the Royal Infirmary, Manchester, and Miss Vincent, Matron of the Royal Infirmary, Leicester—has appeared. It is full of misleading statements which we shall do ourselves the pleasure of disproving at an early date. In this connection it reflects no credit on the two institutions with which these ladies are associated to demonstrate in the public press their absolute lack of knowledge of Parliamentary procedure and political economy. Matrons who in their reactionary intolerance of any liberty of thought and action for nurses, opposed for years the passing of the Nurses' Registration Bill in Parliament, and signed the following statements, cannot blame nursing

reformers if they decline to be governed without consent by women whose judgment and motives they profoundly distrust.

To quote a few of the reasons *against* State Registration, which Miss Sparshott has signed in the Anti-Registration Manifesto compiled by Lord Knutsford:—

THE BELIEFS OF MISS SPARSHOTT.

"We believe . . . any system of State Registration would be detrimental to the Public, and harmful to the best Nurses themselves."

"A State Register of Nurses, far from being a security to the public, would be an actual source of danger."

"The public would be lulled into a false sense of security, being led to believe that the Register would protect them from incompetent and undesirable Nurses."

Is it extraordinary that State Registrationists doubt the *bona fides* of a nominated body of persons who are not ashamed to sign such twaddle one day, and as soon as they realise that Parliament has become convinced of the justice of the registration cause, to wheel round and deny what they have signed the next? The London Hospital attitude towards nursing organisation is antediluvian, but it is at least consistent, and frankly we prefer it to the periphrastic pronouncements and shameless plagiarism of the members of the Council of the College of Nursing Company.

The fact is that these facile women, "anti" one day and "pro" the next, as appears to them expedient, have not yet begun to repent of their autocracy, and they have seriously miscalculated the moral forces ranged up in opposition to their opportunist policy.

We State Registrationists know what we want, and we shall continue to fight for the principles of which we are convinced.

We demand an *elected* Independent Statutory Governing Body to make the laws we intend to obey.

We will not recognise a *nominated* Board or Caucus of hospital officials, who, as salaried servants of their Committees, are not independent, and who are prepared to hand over the government of the nursing profession to lay control.

The two signatories of the letter referred to will do well to assimilate the history of industrial and economic reform, and to reconsider their attitude towards the "Intelligentsia" of the profession, if in the future they hope to deserve their confidence, and to exert any real influence in their counsels.

THE MATRONS' COUNCIL.

A Meeting of the Matrons' Council will be held at the office, 431, Oxford Street, W., on January 25th, at 4 p.m. There is a good amount of business to transact so that it is hoped members will attend if possible. Mrs. Bedford Fenwick will speak on the three years' work of the French Flag Nursing Corps.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)