

of medicine, and the Bill of the Central Committee accordingly provided for an Independent Governing Body. (Applause.) It was a very dangerous provision that the Constitution of the College should be incorporated in the Bill. The College Constitution, as defined in its Memorandum and Articles of Association, was a very drastic one, and had been turned down by a consensus of medical and nursing opinion in 1905. The powers over nurses claimed by the College and incorporated in its Constitution proved that those who drafted it were not fit to govern the nursing profession. It not only took power for the Council to remove a nurse's name from the register without power of appeal—(Shame)—but whilst posing as a Collegiate Body had actually taken power *not* to grant Diplomas! So terrified were the promoters of this scheme of giving nurses honourable professional status that they had actually taken power to stultify their educational pretensions!

#### THE DANGER OF SUPPLEMENTARY REGISTERS.

2. The College had widely advertised its adoption of the principle of the One Portal system, or entry by equal training and examination to the General Register; while in recent drafts of its Bill it had made provision to institute as many Supplementary Registers (presumably of specialists) as it chose, thus opening many doors to semi-trained persons, a back stairs cut to registration which would inevitably depreciate the General Register, and greatly confuse the public.

Moreover, these Supplementary Registers constituted a grave injustice to the women who would be registered as specialists, and had been instituted to placate institutions, such as children's hospitals, fever hospitals, &c. Nurses so trained had been excluded from membership of the Nursing Services of the Crown during the war, and could only nurse our sick and wounded in a subsidiary position, usually under an untrained Commandant. (Shame.) These Supplementary Registers were a sop to cheap labour. What right had the College to induce nurses to join its ranks upon the distinct provision that it stood for the One Portal system, and then to open the door to inefficient and partially trained nurses, who might include V.A.D.'s?

The Central Committee's Bill provided for a statesmanlike system of reciprocity of training, so that special clinical experience could be included in varied curricula.

#### PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT ON THE FIRST REGISTER.

3. The College Bill provided for the inclusion of all nurses on its Register on the State Register, without discrimination or further fee. This pledge had been made to its nurse members by the College Council. It had no right to make such a promise, and no power to enforce it. It was pledging Parliament on a financial arrangement—what the registration fee should be—a right on which the House of Commons was exceedingly tenacious. It had recently snubbed the House of Lords and held up the Midwives Act Amendment Bill on a much less serious violation of its financial supremacy.

But why were nurses registered by the College Company to have precedence of those on the Register of the Royal Chartered Corporation—or on any other list of nurses? Nothing could be more unjust. The College was attempting to make a corner of registration for those nurses who had paid it a guinea.

The Central Committee's Bill provided for a three years' term of grace, during which time all nurses would have the right to register, under certain defined conditions; and it was not likely that Parliament would permit preferential treatment for a few nurses to the detriment of those who objected to the College Constitution and declined to subscribe to it.

#### NUMBER OF GENERAL NURSING COUNCIL MUST BE DEFINED.

4. Then in the Constitution of the General Nursing Council the numbers of the nominees of the various bodies it was proposed should be represented were not defined. The number should be stated in each case. This was done in the Central Committee's Bill.

#### IMMEDIATE DISSOLUTION OF PROVISIONAL COUNCIL.

5. Provision was made in the College Bill for the dissolution "forthwith" of the Provisional Council set up under the Act, on which the trained nurses' societies were represented, immediately it had prepared for the Privy Council the Rules regulating the Constitution of the General Nursing Council, so that all the Provisional Council had to do was to commit suicide. It would have no time to make the Rules and Regulations to which the nurses had to conform, or in which to establish an *independent constituency* of registered nurses to elect the Council empowered with this responsibility. The scheme was to adopt the College Register, and forthwith constitute its members the electorate for the whole Nursing Profession. To this suggestion the Central Committee took strong exception. Under the Central Committee's Bill the First Council would have a two years' term of office, as it would take quite that time to frame Rules and form a representative and independent electorate.

#### NO CONTROL BY NURSE-TRAINING SCHOOLS.

6. It was difficult to imagine that any body of British people would deliberately define such a system as that incorporated in the College Bill, but we were not concerned with motives, but with the letter of the law. We claimed the right of self-determination and self-government when trained and registered, and were not going to submit to be controlled by the Nurse Training Schools, governed by laymen and their officials, which had no responsibility for trained nurses unless in their employment.

#### LOCAL BOARDS. THE VILLAGE PUMP.

7. The College had introduced into its Bill provision for the establishment of Local Boards in various parts of the United Kingdom, other than Boards national in character in England and

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)