

Miss Ferrier stated that the Central Committee collected £22,000. It was in Mrs. Bedford Fenwick's letter to the *Times* on May 21st. (A voice: "Nothing of the sort.")

In thirty years, said Miss Ferrier, you have accomplished nothing. (A voice: "Everything.")

In March, 1919, you held a meeting at the Mansion House. (A voice: "Who is 'you'?") You said a Club was essential for trained nurses, and that this Club should be opened. It was passed unanimously. What has been done? Nothing. You have not got a Club.

Then, Miss Ferrier continued, "There is a Nation's Fund for Nurses." (Hisses.) She was not, she said, in a position to give the number of nurses in the R.B.N.A. and other societies helped by that Fund—women who were out of work, poor things, and could not help themselves, and the College of Nursing had come to their assistance, even to that of members of St. Bartholomew's Hospital. It is the College which has done it. You will all, said Miss Ferrier, have to come to the College. (Cries, "We never will," "We'll starve first." "If the College met our needs we should not be asking for a Trade Union.") "The College hears of these cases, and this is happening though the College has done so much. It is because there are so many blind people among you that you cannot see. (A voice "We can see that the College wrecked the Nurses' Bill.")

#### A SPLENDID TRIUMPH.

MRS. BEDFORD FENWICK (from the Hall): "Madam Chair, I did not intend to speak at this meeting, but as I have been attacked by name I *will* speak." On ascending the platform, Mrs. Fenwick received a tremendous ovation from the nurses present and waived her hand towards the audience, in recognition of their sympathy, the nurses cheering and waving their hands in response to her greeting.

Mrs. Fenwick said that the College of Nursing, Ltd., by its wrecking tactics, had prevented the Nurses' Registration Bill, promoted by the Central Committee, from passing into law before the Recess; but the Minister of Health had redeemed the pledge which he gave in the House of Commons on June 27th, and on the previous day (November 6th) had introduced his Bill for the State Registration of Trained Nurses in the House of Commons. That was a splendid triumph. (Loud and prolonged applause.)

It was just thirty-two years since she had initiated the movement to obtain, through State Registration, organization of nursing education and better economic conditions for nurses.

Governors of hospitals, and many supine Matrons had opposed the movement, and during the whole time that the progressive wing of the profession had been trying to organize to improve their conditions, these Governors had ignored the opinion and opposed the aspirations of the workers. They had directed their Matrons to sign manifestoes which stated that a legal system of Registration of Nurses is inexpedient

in principle, injurious to the best interests of nurses, and of doubtful public benefit.

After years of propaganda, said Mrs. Fenwick, we convinced the legislature and the public that this long deferred reform was imperative, and success was within our grasp. Then the opposition hastily formed the College of Nursing, Ltd.

The Chairman of the British Red Cross Society, some secretaries in its office, with a barrister and others—seven laymen in all—formed a company to control the nurses, and a clause in its Memorandum gave the Council the power to remove a nurse-member from its Register without the power of appeal, and every nurse who had joined the College had, whether she knew it or not, subscribed to this clause, and placed herself in a helpless and invidious position. That 15,000 nurses had done so was incomprehensible to a British woman.

The previous speaker had said that the Central Committee had collected £22,000 and done nothing. The Central Committee had collected nothing, but through the self-sacrifice of the pioneers of the Registration movement, not less than £20,000 had been given by members of the nursing profession in the past thirty years in support of the cause. It was their own money they had subscribed, and not money obtained from the public through Victory balls, flag-days and other reprehensible methods. The pioneers had worked for, paid for, and won the Registration Bill. Was that nothing? (Applause.)

Mrs. Fenwick concluded by proposing that the meeting should send a vote of thanks to Dr. Addison, Minister of Health, for bringing in the Nurses' Registration Bill on the previous day. (Loud and continued applause.)

Other speakers included Mrs. Gordon, who characterised the College of Nursing as undemocratic. She hoped the nurses would form themselves into a strong Union, the College of Nursing was "all done from the top," good organisation could only proceed from the bottom.

Miss Isabel Macdonald said Miss Ferrier had taunted the R.B.N.A. with doing nothing about a Nurses' Club. Its plans in that direction had had to be held over while it combatted the opposition of the College of Nursing to the Nurses' Registration Bill in the House of Commons. The College had appealed to the charitable public to support its schemes, through the Nation's Fund for Nurses, and had used the indigent nurse as a bait, but the Nation's Fund had written to one Society of which she was Hon. Secretary to ask it to help applicants who had appealed to that Fund. (Shame.)

Miss Klaassen pointed out that Matrons were not in the position of employers, but of paid managers.

#### VOTE OF THANKS TO MINISTER OF HEALTH.

Mrs. Fenwick's proposal that a vote of thanks should be sent to the Minister of Health was then put from the Chair and carried unanimously, and

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