

## A GOVERNMENT PLEDGE.

But there is still good hope that a Nurses' Registration Bill may become law in a not remote future. Dr. Addison, Minister of Health on June 27th in the House of Commons, undertook at the earliest possible time, on behalf of the Government, to introduce a measure providing for the Registration of Nurses—subject to the exigencies of the Session.

Thus the work of many years has borne fruit, the education of the public, of Members of Parliament, of the Government, in the necessity for State Registration has been accomplished. It marks another milestone on the road. Let us hope that the exigencies of the Session will permit the Minister of Health to redeem his pledge, and that a just Nurses Registration Act may have been passed before we meet again.

The members of the Society for the State Registration of Nurses must maintain their old attitude of vigilance while eagerly awaiting a Government measure.

The Report was received with loud and prolonged applause.

## MRS. FENWICK THANKS MISS LE GEYT.

Mrs. Bedford Fenwick thanked Miss Le Geyt for her report, and congratulated the League on having a member who could write it. She added that Major Astor, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Health, had, on the previous day, again given an assurance that a Government Bill for the State Registration of Nurses would be forthcoming.

The present Bill was a great emancipation Bill; she hardly thought that any Government would draft one giving so much power to the working nurse. The members of the League should help Dr. Addison to place a just Registration Bill on the Statute Book, and make it clear that no subterfuge like recognition, or any ambiguous thing of that kind would be acceptable. All politicians were impressed by public sentiment, but the experience of Registrationists in the House of Commons did not always impress them with the understanding and ability of members in regard to the Registration Question.

Had the urgent demands of the College of Nursing representatives for the withdrawal of the pioneer Bill been acceded to, there would have been a clear course, with nothing to prevent the College of Nursing Bill being carried through its Third Reading in the House of Lords, and sent down to the Commons for consideration this Session. We did not intend to fall into this transparent trap.

We had seen a fine piece of legislation wrecked—wrecked by the co-operation of members representing the College of Nursing, Ltd., put up to do this reprehensible job.

Mrs. Fenwick showed that when the College was unable to get its way in Committee it went over the heads of the House of Commons to the House of Lords, where there was a block of hospital chairmen, and secured the second reading of its

Bill, on the presumption that the two Bills might be considered together. Subsequent tactics in the House of Commons prevented this.

Major Barnett was a sportsman, and said in the House of Commons that he did not intend to commit hari kari—he would not withdraw the Bill to please the College of Nursing, or any other body.

Mrs. Fenwick urged the members of the League who wished to be governed by an independent statutory body, set up by Act of Parliament, to be vigilant, and to impress the Minister of Health with their determination not to submit to the professional domination of the College of Nursing, Ltd. Mrs. Fenwick's speech was also received with prolonged applause.

Miss Curtis, from the chair, thanked Mrs. Bedford Fenwick for her explanation of the situation, with which the League would agree.

## COLLEGE OF MUSHROOM GROWTH.

Mrs. Launcelot Andrews said that Mrs. Fenwick and those associated with her had educated the country on the question of nurses registration. That, after all said and done, was a matter of fact. The present organisation which was opposing the Central Committee's Bill was a mushroom growth. The years of its existence were infinitesimal. The original promoters of Registration were in the position of all pioneers; they had a thankless task. There were always plenty to drop in and secure the fruit, there were only a few to sow the seed.

Mrs. Andrews asked whether the war, and the practices which had arisen through the war in connection with nursing were calculated to raise its standard. One or two things made one pause for thought. Reconstruction was in the air, and the things some of us had looked forward to for thirty years might come true. It might seem a far cry from the nursing question to Sir Douglas Haig's Report to the Pensions Committee. Yet how many of those boys whom we learnt from that Report were starving, hard up for means, had been begged from in the name of the nurses, and asked to give money to a questionable affair on their behalf? It was a retrograde step to allow outsiders to interfere in our affairs. Much more professional organisation was required. We should be self-supporting and independent.

## THE CHAIRMAN DEPLORES CHARITY APPEALS.

The Chairman said the question was whether we should be a servile community, or organise ourselves in regard to registration, education, and organisation for our own protection. Let every individual nurse do something for the organisation of her own profession on professional lines. It was with the very deepest indignation and regret that we knew that appeals had been made by idle people on our behalf.

## THE WHOLE PROFESSION RESPONSIBLE.

What are the members of other Nurses' Leagues doing to save the great principles incorporated in our Bill, when a Government Bill is forth-

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