

mission that few would be prepared to make, for it would demonstrate their ignorance of the affairs of the Nursing World. Mrs. Fenwick would speak to them on the Regulations framed under the Nurses' Registration Act, 1919. In the course of his professional work he had to read many Acts, and he found that many of them required a great deal of explanation. Mrs. Bedford Fenwick was an authority second to none on the subject on which she would speak to them.

It was an additional pleasure to welcome her, as he was given to understand that she was initiated into the duties of a nurse at the Old Infirmary in Manchester 43 years ago. He had seen it in print, and so it must be true, in which case it was a testimony to the healthfulness and pleasures of nursing.

He then invited Mrs. Fenwick to address the meeting.

THE ADDRESS.

Before addressing the meeting on the somewhat academic subject of the Rules for Registration, Mrs. Bedford Fenwick endorsed the statement of the Chairman, and said it was just 43 years since she entered the splendid old M.R.I. as a special probationer for a year's training, every day of which was full of vital interest and happiness for which she was still grateful. An atmosphere of goodwill permeated the whole hospital, she never received a reprimand, and kindness was showered upon her.

A KEY VOCATION OF NATIONAL EFFICIENCY AND HUMAN HAPPINESS.

It was in the wards of that wonderful old hospital that she first realised the potential power of nursing, not merely as a remedial agent, but as one of the key vocations of national efficiency and human happiness, interdependently responsible with medical science in guarding the sacred flame of human life—a noble vocation indeed—to be approached with a searching of heart and conscience upon the part of every woman seeking so high an altitude of public duty. To qualify for such responsibility altruism was not enough. We had learned that from the insufficiency of the "religious" in relation to progressive medical practice. The first duty of those who guard the people in health and tend them in sickness was to seek accurate knowledge, to acquire and apply it.

Without the firm pressure of the Law it was very difficult for any group of professional workers to define, acquire, maintain and apply standards of knowledge and skill, to qualify them to do their duty to the very best of their ability.

Thus, in petitioning for a Nurses' Registration Act, granting power to define and enforce standards of Nursing Education, and to frame Rules to protect high ethical and moral standards of conduct, the Nurses of the United Kingdom were not inspired by selfish and ignoble aims, but with a generous love of their kind, and commendable self-respect, and a determination to induce the State, of which they form so worthy a part, to recognise their right to organise their work, so that

it might be of the very highest value to their fellow citizens, and their skill might receive the respectful recognition which was long overdue. It had taken the pioneers of that policy thirty years to convince Parliament and the people—to say nothing of the nurses themselves—that without legal status it was impossible to procure for the benefit of the community those high standards of organisation, skill and efficiency in the Nursing Profession which should be at its disposal.

The history of that economic struggle had still to be written. For the moment she would touch on the result.

On the 23rd December, 1919, the Royal Assent was given to three Bills for the Registration of Nurses, and it was the provisions of the Act for England and Wales which they were there to discuss. Mrs. Fenwick spoke of the gratitude due from the Nursing Profession to Dr. Addison, at that time Minister of Health, for the great energy and persistence with which he had piloted the Bill through Parliament in a few weeks.

THE GOVERNMENT ACT.

Mrs. Fenwick then stated that, as far back as 1904, the Nurses drafted a Registration Bill—it was a fine liberal measure—asking for much more than they expected to get. The Government Act was largely framed upon it and incorporated many of its most important provisions.

PRIVILEGES SECURED.

The Government Act granted the following privileges incorporated in the original Bill:—

(1) It established a General Nursing Council on which trained nurses had a substantial majority, and provided that the Registered Nurses of the future should elect sixteen nurses to nine lay and medical nominated members on the Council. Thus, the nurses were professionally enfranchised. This Council had power to frame Rules for the conduct of business; also

(2) To form and keep the Register.

(3) To prescribe the training and define the standards of education, and regulate the conduct of examinations to qualify for admission to the Register.

(4) To award Certificates granting the protected title of "Registered Nurse."

(5) To make provision for a protected Uniform and Badge.

(6) To prescribe fees for registration and examination.

(7) To maintain discipline by protecting the privileges granted to Registered Nurses, by removing from the Register persons convicted of felony, misdemeanour, or guilty of any misconduct. Aggrieved persons had an appeal to the High Court.

The Minister of Health was the ultimate authority in certain particulars and had to approve the Rules framed to carry out the provisions of the Act. He also had power to nominate five persons on to the General Nursing Council.

The General Nursing Council, since it came into office in May, 1920, had worked strenuously and

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