

with nurses who hold the certificate of the General Nursing Council by virtue of having passed the State Examination.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

SOPHIA CARTWRIGHT,
Sister-Secretary.

RESOLUTION.

"The Committee of the Registered Nurses' Society, a Co-operation of Trained and Certificated Nurses who have passed through three years' hospital training, have learnt that a proposal has been made, in the General Nursing Council, to omit the record of the certificates of proficiency of trained nurses in the Register to be published under the authority of the General Nursing Council for England and Wales.

"In the opinion of the Nurses, such action would be most damaging to their professional and economic standing, and the State Register rendered useless to the medical profession and to the public.

"This ill-advised proposal has aroused a deep sense of injury and distrust in the minds of the members of this Staff, and in the opinion of this Committee it is of urgent importance that a guarantee should be given that such injury is not contemplated if certificated Nurses avail themselves of the privilege of State Registration."

We wonder what the Nurses' Co-operation (Langham Street), the Chartered Nurses' Society, and other Private Nurses' Co-operations are doing to express their views to the Minister of Health on this question of such vital importance to private nurses. It would be interesting to learn what the Council of the College of Nursing, Ltd., and its local centres are doing to help to secure the record of the Certificates of its members on the State Register. Certificates are notified in a special column of the College Register—so that presumably the Council and the members are opposed to professional degradation by their omission.

THE NATIONAL UNION OF TRAINED NURSES.

It may be of interest to readers of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING to have a short account of the history and activities of the National Union of Trained Nurses, which has been officially supplied to us.

This Union was started in 1910 under the name of "The Nurses' Social Union." There was at that time a great need for exchange of ideas and mutual help amongst nurses, especially those in the provinces and outlying country districts. These nurses had not the advantages of the London ones with their many opportunities of attending lectures, &c. From the first the idea was to supply nurses with what they wanted, and not what other people wanted them to want, and the Union has evolved and developed on these lines. Of course, there has always been the difficulty of getting nurses to be interested even in what concerns their ultimate welfare, but fortunately there has always been a keen minority of devoted

women, such as our founder, Miss Eden, and many others of note, who have given their time, energy and money to the building up of the Union. If only nurses would wake up and share some of the enthusiasm of these pioneers, what a great deal more could be accomplished! At the time of its foundation self-organisation was a more or less extreme act, and the cry from employers was that nurses would compare notes with each other and become discontented with their salaries, &c. Further comment here is unnecessary. Matrons also were averse to the idea of democratic control and, with a few notable exceptions, refused to assist them to work for their organisation, and the protection of their patients through a Nurses' Registration Act; in fact, a large proportion signed a memorial against State Registration.

In spite of difficulties and opposition, the Union pursued its uphill way. It has local branches in touch with the Central Office, and limits its membership to the fully trained nurse; only a fully trained nurse is ever seen wearing the little silver and green enamel star.

It is a democratic body, founded on the principle of self-government; a union of nurses governed by nurses, not employers, other societies having doctors and lay people on their governing bodies. It is not a trade union and, therefore, is completely independent, and so unlikely to be drawn into industrial strife. It has done most valuable work in promoting State Registration of Nurses, the representation of women on public bodies, in representation of the *profession* and not merely individuals, the organisation of professional meetings in different parts of England, the institution of local exhibitions, travelling exhibitions, lectures, and the publication and sale of posters and leaflets on health and infant welfare, the first professionally managed registry for nurses, and was in the position of being able quickly to obtain nurses who went to all parts of the world on the outbreak of war—about three thousand passing through the Registry during the period of hostilities.

The aim of the Union is to support the highest ideals of the nursing profession. Its objects are to promote by co-operation the effectiveness of the profession and, through it, the good of the community; to unite nurses into a common organisation; to advance in Parliament and elsewhere the interests and status of the nursing profession; to bring questions concerning nurses before the appropriate authorities; and to utilise the special experience of nurses for the public good.

It is obvious that nurses joining such a Union are doing their share to help keep alive that spirit of self-sacrifice and idealism, united with practical efficiency, which are necessary to the making of a good nurse; and each one, like a stone in a building, adds strength to the main body.

Particulars as to membership, &c., may be had on application to the Secretary, at 38, Parliament Street, London, S.W.1.

E. NICHOLLS, *Secretary.*

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