

benefit of the Nursing Profession; (2) to consider, and take action on any proposed legislation, or on the application of any Act of Parliament, affecting the Nursing Profession; (3) to consider questions of National Health before Parliament; (4) to use and support THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING as its official organ. This was in accordance with a suggestion made in this room by Dr. Addison, that the experience gained during the long struggle for Registration should still be utilised.

COUNCILLOR KENT reminded the meeting that Dr. Addison, as Minister of Health, brought in the Government Measure. It contained almost all the provisions of Major Barnett's Bill, but it provided for a first Council, nominated by the Minister, instead of, as we had hoped, the nurse members being appointed by organised bodies of nurses. The present General Nursing Council for England and Wales was therefore nominated by the Minister of Health and, of course, our honoured leader, Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, in whom we had implicit faith and confidence, was upon it. Could there be a greater expert than we had in the one who had worked so untiringly and disinterestedly for so many years? One member of the Council had said, her work on that Council was invaluable, they could not do without her.

The passing of the Registration Acts marked a new era in the Nursing Profession. All the spade work was over, the time had arrived for constructive work. Those who had laboured so long to obtain State Registration brought with them to the task long and priceless experience. One would have thought its success was assured, that those less conversant with the question would have been so glad to avail themselves of the experience of those who were so well equipped.

The first trouble arose about the record of certificates, upon a Resolution moved by Miss Cox-Davies:—

"That Nurses whose applications for registration comply with the Rules of the Council be registered simply as 'Existing' or 'Intermediate' Nurses, and that the word 'trained' be used for all alike, and that the word 'certificated' be reserved until such time as the future nurses are admitted to the Register as a result of State Examination."

THE CHAIRMAN said the injustice of the suggestion was so obvious that she wondered it could be entertained for a moment. She believed it was in the interests of a few, but the greatest good of the greatest number should be considered. It was with great pleasure that she was able to announce that the Minister had now signed the amended Schedule providing that the certificate of training, if any, should appear in the qualification column against a nurse's name. (Loud and prolonged applause.)

The next trouble was that the Chairman resigned, and the majority of the Council went on strike for ten weeks. Six loyal members only remained and would have done the work, but were held up for lack of a quorum on the Council and on most of the Committees. Then the strike was called

off, and the members came back, and at the first meeting gave notices of motion of a most damaging character.

Dr. Goodall's motion proposed to admit as evidence qualifying for registration a declaration of the Secretary or other responsible officer of any organized body of nurses recognised for this purpose by the Council that, on the admission of the applicant to membership the certificate, or a certified copy thereof, was produced to that body.

Miss Cox-Davies gave notice of an Instruction, the effect of which would be to make the Registrar responsible for examining applications, instead of members of the Council upon whom this duty had been placed by Parliament; and Miss Coulton's sinister suggestion as to the dissolution of the Standing Committees was so transparent as to need no comment.

The first motion cut at the root of a vital principle, that of direct evidence.

By passing the second, the Council, which was a Statutory Body possessing judicial functions, annulled its own Instruction to the Registration Committee. By playing fast and loose in this way, and by neglecting their duties, and preventing the loyal members of the Council from discharging the duties placed upon them by Parliament, the recalcitrant members of the Council had lowered its prestige enormously.

COUNCILLOR KENT said that she herself was a member of a Statutory Body, and she would get no sympathy either from the opposite party, or from her own if she absented herself from its meetings in a tiff. Further, she had to ask leave of the Council to be absent for any length of time. If not, she was liable to a fine of £20. Before she took her seat on the Council, moreover, she had to make a solemn declaration that, having taken office, she would do her duty faithfully in the best interests of the people for whom she was appointed to work.

RESOLUTIONS.

RESOLUTION I.

Certificate Question. Publicity Secures Justice.

COUNCILLOR KENT then called on MISS E. B. KINGSFORD to move the first Resolution.

"That this Meeting, convened by the Registered Nurses' Parliamentary Council, desires to record its strong protest against the determined attempt made by Hospital Matrons and other members of the General Nursing Council for England and Wales to deprive Registered Nurses of the record of their certificates, which would have resulted in serious economic damage to the younger nurses; and is of opinion that persons whose judgment is so at fault cannot safely be trusted to discharge the responsible duties devolving upon members of the General Nursing Council.

"This Meeting further begs to thank those members of the General Nursing Council who, by giving publicity to this recommendation, enabled the Nursing Profession to express its strong disapprobation in this connection.

"This Meeting begs to thank the Minister of Health for his sympathetic consideration of the question, and for signing the amended Schedule, thus securing

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