

justice to nurses by providing for the recognition of their certificates of proficiency on the State Register."

MISS KINGSFORD said: "These are days of stress and difficulty when sane people—especially those wielding authority—desire above all things peace, and the conservation of fretted nerves and of shrunken financial resources; days, moreover, when the nerves and resources of the rank and file make an urgent appeal to be safeguarded. This is unquestionably true; yet ever since last October a majority of the General Nursing Council have wantonly put us to absolutely needless worry, trouble and expense. The General Nursing Council is, under Parliament, the statutory custodian of our interests and the body responsible for our advancement and our safety, yet a majority of the Registration Committee made a determined effort to deprive nurses of the record of their certificates of proficiency on the State Register. Since this meeting was called the danger has been averted, but I ask you to record your strong protest against the unwarrantable action taken by that majority. From an economic point of view it is self-evident that an almost prohibitive handicap would have been the fate of the already heavily handicapped young Nurses who trained just before they could be eligible for State Examination. These nurses have conformed to the only existing conditions of training, and many of them have, on a bare pittance, devoted four of the best years of their lives in order to gain the certificate of their training school, on which they put a justifiable premium—a mental attitude which dates back at least to the days of St. Paul. The General Nursing Council drew up carefully-considered rules by which these Nurses would suffer no more economic disadvantage than was absolutely unavoidable. Applications for registration under these rules came along and then a majority of the Committee determined, with unparalleled arrogance, to sweep aside all this hard-earned and well-deserved prestige, and withhold the record of certificates from the State Register. On the list of the General Nursing Council figure medical men, and I submit that no profession more jealously safeguards its economic position than does the great Medical Profession. Then we have employers of nursing labour—well, possibly they may be unable to see things economically from the Nurses' point of view, which is obviously at variance with their own. Then there are Matrons of Hospitals and Training Schools, and the same excuse cannot be ventured on their behalf. Look at the names of the Matrons and you will see that most are members of the College of Nursing, Ltd., and are the identical women who helped to frame the rules for the Register of that private society of Nurses. On the College Register, quite wisely, a record of certificates was deemed necessary. What a lack of logic to deem it unnecessary for the State Register! What a Gilbertian situation, and what a travesty of justice to suggest that the English and Welsh Nurse should be less well equipped for the labour market than her Scotch and Irish colleague! I

ask, How can we be expected to have faith in people such as these, who have made it amply evident how little they really care for our needs? If they have so grossly mishandled an obviously just situation, how can we repose a shred of confidence in the attitude they are likely to assume when subtle matters come up for consideration? What hope have we for intelligent justice at the hands of persons who so lightly regard the responsibility of office and so glibly contravene or ruthlessly whittle down any rule to which they personally take objection? Remember, they are the same people who unanimously passed the rules. This leads me to the frightful danger of those College Matrons on the General Nursing Council who seem to invariably see eye to eye with each other—first they require certificates, then they propose to take them out. We may well be thankful that the policy of these Matrons has been frustrated.

Now let me turn to the more grateful task of thanking those members of the General Nursing Council who have averted the danger just past. In October, when the gauntlet *vs* certificates was thrown down, it was instantly picked up by Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, who has tirelessly fought for the right until the Minister of Health put his signature to the Amended Schedule which carried out the intention of the First Schedule and provided for the record of certificates. Mrs. Fenwick published the whole situation in THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING, and I ask what would be our state now without our professional organ in the Press? To it we owe an enormous debt of gratitude. Its valiant editor and sub-editor see to it that we hear the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, concerning matters of our profession. I would ask for much more support for this invaluable paper. The six members of the General Council to whom we owe cordial thanks are Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, Miss Cattell, Miss MacCallum, Miss MacDonald, Miss Villiers, and Mr. Christian. (Each name as mentioned was warmly applauded.)

Before leaving the subject, I must ask an expression of your gratitude to the Minister of Health for his sympathetic consideration of this question, whereby he has had a large share in securing this justice to Nurses, that their certificates of proficiency appear on the State Register to their great advantage.

MISS HELEN PEARSE said: I have great pleasure in seconding the Resolution. What value do you place on your certificate? Is it not the very thing for which you worked so hard and earnestly? Yet a majority on the Registration Committee would have been quite willing to brush it aside. We owe our knowledge of this proposition simply to Mrs. Bedford Fenwick. Had it not been that she made plain in the Council what was being attempted this thing would have been done in secret, and the wrecking of the Register would have followed in the same way.

What a light-hearted attitude for the Committee to take on a matter so important to us. But this

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