

and would occur, sooner or later. He wished to point this moral that if more people were employed more mistakes occurred.

MISS MACDONALD said she could not sit at the table and hear this resolution proposed without rising to support it. She felt very strongly on this matter, and was much opposed to the sole power of examining applications and scrutinising testimonials being placed in the hands of one person, who was not a member of the Council, and who was also responsible for all the organisation of the office.

SIR JENNER VERRALL said he was absent at the last meeting, but, when the Council passed the new Resolution giving discretion to the Registrar, they did it because they thought it a safe thing to do, to secure that proper people were admitted to the Register. He was immensely surprised that she should admit this accusation for the Resolution was an accusation. It accused her of examining certain applications, and of recommending for Registration persons whose applications did not conform to the Rules.

His first point in regard to this accusation against an official was that the right number of applications not in order was not 4 out of 20, but 4 out of 807. His second point was an exact endorsement of that put forward by Dr. Goodall. The presentation of the four applications to the Council for approval was deferred until a new Rule was approved by the Minister, which it was anticipated would cover these cases. Therefore, he said that the Registrar was abundantly justified. If the situation was not proof of human fallibility in one direction, it was proof of human fallibility in another.

Then at what stage did the mover of the present Resolution draw attention to these applications? At the meeting? There was an English custom known as "playing the game." Was it playing the game when you knew, or suspected, that applications were not in order to allow the Council to pass them in the hope of obtaining a cheap triumph at the expense of an official who could not defend herself? He spoke strongly, but he felt strongly. He regretted the methods adopted; he recognised the services rendered to the cause of Registration in the past, but he was not prepared to see an attack made upon an official in terms which were not just.\*

MISS SEYMOUR YAPP said she spoke as a woman responsible to a public body. She knew that an official might come to a condition when she could scarcely do her work accurately.

She wanted to know why the work was in such a mess, and she went to the office of the General Nursing Council to enquire. She found that the Register had been declared open, and over a thousand applications came in before they were ready to be dealt with. There would be mistakes in the future, but she hoped that every time

a mistake was made it would not be dealt with in this way.

MISS STEELE said that if they found persistent mistakes they might change the Registrar.

MISS SWISS said that the office staff worked to the limit of their capacity. If an error of judgment had been made they must realise that the Registrar was overworked.

MISS COX DAVIES thought that the action of the Council in putting things in the hands of one official was justified. The lesson of this discussion was that the Instruction was right in putting the consideration of applications in the hands of one responsible officer.

MISS DOWBIGGIN expressed the opinion that the Registrar had been too courteous to the late Chairman in not reconsidering applications which she had already examined. She asked every member of the Council to draw attention to it.

#### A DISGRACEFUL PERVERSION OF THE TRUTH.

MRS. BEDFORD FENWICK denied absolutely that the twenty applications to which the resolution referred, had been "scrutinised" by her as Chairman of the Registration Committee. Whenever an application with a conjoint certificate had come before her she had referred, not deferred, it until such time as a new Rule was passed under which it could be considered. None of these applications had been recommended to the Registration Committee during her term of office. She called for the lists and for the slips, which would prove her statement. The excuse put forward in regard to them was a disgraceful perversion of the truth.

All applications from nurses with conjoint certificates were put aside for consideration until a Rule was agreed by the Minister concerning them. Before this Rule was approved she had been ejected from the Registration Committee. From that time the Registrar had been given absolute power and was responsible for scrutinising papers and recommending applications for registration, without inspection by the Registration Committee; in the cases alluded to she had presumably neglected this duty.

In regard to the other cases mentioned by Dr. Goodall, she pointed out that none of them were passed without reference to the Registration Committee, of which he was a member. Every application and the forms and references were in the room for its scrutiny. She desired to emphasise that point.

As for the attack upon her all round the room by those responsible for the new system, it was too contemptible to reply to in detail. She maintained that the Council had done what was indefensible in making an official instead of the Registration Committee responsible for verifying and recommending applications for registration to the Council. She declined to be intimidated, and made the scapegoat for the Registrar's errors.

If that was the method supported by the Council in dealing with those who endeavoured to secure the accuracy of the Register, it became

\* SIR JENNER VERRALL was not present at the Council meeting, and his statements and deductions are entirely inaccurate.—ED.

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