

through to the Report stage, only to have it heartlessly blocked by a group of members acting for the College of Nursing, Ltd. Then Dr. Addison, Minister of Health, stepped up to the table and gave a pledge that the Government would promote a Nurses' Registration Bill. He kept his pledge, and his Bill received the Royal Assent on December 23rd, 1919.

So far so good.

The Act set up a General Nursing Council, nominated in the first instance, to be dissolved not later than December, 1922. On to that Council I was nominated by the Minister of Health, and I claim that during my term of office the Nurses' interests and welfare have been my constant and only consideration.

Elected as Chairman of the Registration Committee, I helped to draft the Rules, including those for the honourable conduct of business. They were just Rules—every nurse to be treated equally without favour. They proved too just, and it was found that before preferential treatment could be given to a certain group a minority of the Council including myself must be removed from power. How, by a secret attack upon me at the Ministry of Health, this was done; how the Rules were altered and thrust through Parliament is now past history. It may suffice if I state *seriatim* how my vote has been cast on the most important questions in dispute.

1. I voted and agitated *against* the proposal to deprive certificated nurses of the record of their certificates on the published Register, the result of which would be to degrade Existing and Intermediate Nurses into an unqualified class, and deprive them of power to compete for professional promotion with State Examined and Certificated Nurses. I drafted a new Rule to include the record of Certificates, to which the Minister of Health gave his approval.

2. I voted *against* the Instruction depriving the Registration Committee of the right to scrutinise application forms and references without the consent of the Registrar, before recommending applicants to the Council as persons qualified for Registration.

3. I voted *against* the disruption of business by changing the constitution of all the Standing Committees nine months before the election of the new Council, and strongly disapprove of the monopoly of power now in the hands of the medical and lay members of the Council, which has resulted in depriving the nurses of rightful authority on their own Governing Body.

4. I have opposed the indefinite postponement of giving effect to the Syllabus of "prescribed training," to which probationers have a right under Section 3 (2) (a) and (b) of the Nurses Registration Act, as proposed by the Education Committee. Such a policy deprives probationers now in training of the most valuable privilege granted to them by Parliament, and leaves the standard of Nursing Education undefined.

I have devoted my life to the interests of the profession to which I belong, and am still prepared to serve it, if elected to a further term of office on the General Nursing Council. We are living in a most momentous period in the history of nursing; looking backward I call to mind thousands of splendid, capable, devoted nurses, but there is probably not one of them who would not declare that she might be still more capable if she had had the opportunities of systematised instruction provided for in the Nurses' Registration Act. Looking forward I see crowds of eager, earnest, ambitious young women, entering through the portal of a State Examination into their heritage, with ever broadening opportunities as yet undreamed of.

I know and admire the nurses of both classes. Standing at the Rubicon I stretch out one hand to the nurses of the past and the other to those of the future. There is much yet to be done, and done by your General Nursing Council to weld both into that great Service devoted to the welfare of humanity, the betterment of the race, and the cure and relief of sickness, known as the Nursing Profession, to which we have the honour to belong. It appears to me that those who have lived and worked for their profession in both eras have special opportunities of service at the present time, and if by your Votes you elect me to the new Council, it will be my aim to place my life-long experience at your service.

ETHEL G. FENWICK.

### ELECTION TO THE GENERAL NURSING COUNCIL FOR SCOTLAND.

The postal ballot is now in process in Scotland for the election of Nurse Representatives on to the General Nursing Council for Scotland, and on the issue depends the manner in which Scottish nurses will be governed in its work for the next five years. In recording their votes, Scottish nurses should keep in view that their Council should fairly represent the interests of all branches of nursing.

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