

HOW THE COLLEGE CAUCUS CAPTURED THE COUNCIL.

(Continued from page 133.)

We may skip along through the centuries feeling quite sure that high-stepping barbarians will shadow us and pounce when the hour of emancipation arrives. As past generations of nurses know (our modern nurse is sadly ignorant on the evolution of her own profession), there was no organisation of Trained Nurses, in any country, until, on November 21st, 1887, a Meeting of hospital Matrons, only nine in number, met at 20, Upper Wimpole Street, London, upon the invitation of Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, the recent Matron of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, E.C. At this Meeting it was determined to form a Nurses' Association, and at a Meeting of 40 representative nurses on December 7th, the British Nurses' Association was inaugurated to bring about Registration of Nurses by a professional body, and to help nurses to help each other in time of adversity, sickness, and old age. The very basis of the Association was to be self-control and self-support.

On February 13th, 1888, a great Public Meeting to launch the Association was held at St. George's Hall, London, attended by Her Royal Highness Princess Christian, who had then become President of the Association, to which the late Queen Victoria granted the prefix Royal in 1891.

The irreconcilable attitude of the Governors of the majority of the large Nurse Training Schools to an independent Association of Trained Nurses is now a matter of history, and, as recent events have proved, the hospital and medical world is still liberally sprinkled with cave-men in active opposition to the professional self-government of trained nurses.

In the forefront of these reactionaries mention must be made of the late Dr. Steele, then Medical Superintendent of Guy's Hospital, and his successor in that post, Dr. (now Sir) E. Cooper Perry, then an Assistant Physician to the hospital, and the authorities of many of the large London Hospitals, together with the anti-registrationist-in-chief, the late Mr. (Sir) Henry C. Burdett, editor of the *Hospital* newspaper.

When, having enrolled some seventeen hundred members, the Association prepared the first draft of its Royal Charter of Incorporation in 1889 (granted in 1893), the following Anti-Registration Manifesto—the first of many—was prepared and launched from St. Thomas' Hospital:—

THE PROPOSED REGISTRATION OF NURSES.

MEMORIAL of NURSE TRAINING SCHOOL AUTHORITIES.

To the Editor of the "Nursing Record" (now incorporated in the "British Journal of Nursing").

We, the undersigned, beg the favour of your insertion of the following statement, which we think it desirable to make, in view of a paragraph which has been published on the subject of the Registration of Nurses, in which we note with surprise the statement that the main object of the British Nurses' Association "is in conformity with a great public want and a widespread professional demand!"

We would wish to point out that those who represent the largest Nursing interests in the Metropolis, and throughout the country, and who have the most to do with the training and examination of nurses, have not only declined to take part in the Association, but consider that its proposed enrolment of Nurses in a common Register, if carried out, would (1) lower the position of the best trained nurses; (2) be detrimental to the advancement of the teaching of Nursing; (3) be disadvantageous to the public; and (4) be injurious to the medical practitioner.

We hope that a final judgment upon this important matter will be postponed until the views of those who are opposed to the aims of this Association have been expressed and examined. We further consider it our duty to state that, if a Charter be applied for, on the lines stated in the prospectus of the British Nurses' Association, we shall feel it incumbent upon us to offer thereto all legitimate opposition in our power.

(Signed)

St. Thomas's Hospital and Nightingale Fund Training School.

D. H. Stone, Treasurer of the Hospital.

Harry Verney, Chairman of the Nightingale School.

W. Bowman, F.R.S., Member of Council of Nightingale Fund, and of Council of St. John's House and Sisterhood.

W. Rathbone, Trustee and Member of Council of Nightingale Fund; President Liverpool Training School and Home for Nurses.

H. Bonham Carter, Secretary of the Nightingale Fund.

J. S. Bristowe, M.D., F.R.S., Senior Physician of St. Thomas's Hospital, and Lecturer in Nightingale School.

A. L. Pringle, Matron of St. Thomas's Hospital, and Superintendent of Nightingale Fund Training School.

M. S. Crossland, Sister-in-Charge of the Nightingale Training School.

Guy's Hospital and Training School.

E. H. Lushington, Treasurer.

E. C. Perry, M.D., G. Newton Pitt, M.D., Assistant Physicians, and Instructors of Probationer Nurses.

J. C. Steele, M.D., Superintendent, and Instructor of Nurses.

Westminster Hospital and Training School, Westminster.

Westminster, Chairman.

Rutherford Alcock, Vice-Chairman.

J. J. Troutbeck, D.D., Hon. Treasurer.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)