

PROFESSIONAL DEGRADATION.

In our issue of June 2nd, we called the attention of Registered Nurses to Three Dangers with which the Nursing Profession was faced.

The General Nursing Council has degraded our Register by enforcing them all.

Danger No. 1.

TAXATION WITHOUT REPRESENTATION.

We pointed out that an Examinations' Officer was to be appointed at a salary of £375, rising to £400, and that it had practically been arranged before advertising the post to give this "plum" to an unprofessional clerk with no hospital or nursing experience whatever, recommended by Sir E. Cooper Perry, Hon. Secretary, College of Nursing, Ltd.

Our prediction was soon accomplished. The G.N.C., meeting on June 15th proceeded to elect Miss Elsie Mackirdy to this valuable post, financed by Registered Nurses, although a large number of Registered Nurses—some very well qualified—had applied.

Danger No. 2.

WHAT IS "GOOD CHARACTER?"

We pointed out that an applicant for registration on the General Part of the Register had committed a "misdemeanour" in connection with the Midwives' Act—the penalty for such "misdemeanour" on conviction made the delinquent "liable to imprisonment, with or without hard labour, for any term not exceeding twelve months," and that this applicant had been refused the privilege of examination and registration by the Midwives' Board "at any time."

We learn that, in spite of the disapproval in the first instance of the Registration Committee to recommend this application, the G.N.C. referred it back—and upon reconsideration, strictly *in camera*, proceeded at its next meeting, on June 15th, to admit to registration the person in question; in our opinion a most serious dereliction of public duty upon the part of the Council, which, under Section 3 (2) (c) of the Act, is instructed that persons to be registered must "produce evidence of good character."

The utmost secrecy was maintained by the Registration Committee about this serious affair, as no mention was made in its printed official report to the Council that the matter was to be considered. Thus the Press and the Registered Nurses were kept entirely in the dark so far as this matter was concerned.

This action upon the part of the Council establishes a very improper precedent for placing other undesirable applicants on the Register. We do not see how they can now be kept off. Of course, had the person in question been a poor unprotected nurse, and not a Matron (in the future to act as referee for the "good character" of a Nursing Staff), her application would have been turned down with scant courtesy.

A system whereby favoured applicants can be secretly registered—their names being omitted

from the official list—opens the door to an abominable misuse of power upon the part of the Council—and we call upon the Minister of Health to investigate this particular case.

Danger No. 3.

OUR IRRESPONSIBLE GOVERNING BODY.

On the degradation of the General Part of the Register our worst anticipations have been confirmed. Rule 9 (r) (g) approved by the Council, and Dr. Chapple's "modification" thereof, have enabled thousands of untrained women and V.A.D.s to flood the General Part of the Register, whilst excluding every highly-trained specialist on the Supplementary Parts of the Register. Our so-called "protected" Uniform and Badge—and our titular letters—are now the outward and visible sign of the Great Untrained—and a cruel injury has not only been inflicted on Registered Nurses, but on the unfortunate sick public.

Thus the G.N.C. has accomplished, and not averted, all of the three dangers—and as a profession we sink lower day by day.

Self-government on the same principles enforced by professions of men is the only remedy whereby we can avert further disgrace and dishonour.

We must claim and secure such power—or entirely degenerate into a serf class.

THIRTY PIECES OF SILVER.

A Miss E. Mitcalfe informs us that she is receiving subscriptions for a testimonial to Miss Herbert, the member of the College of Nursing who has taken a prominent part in the agitation to place untrained nurses on, and thus degrade, the State Register; or, as Miss Mitcalfe euphoniously puts it, "to whose efforts is largely due the new modified rule which opens the gate of State Registration more widely."

Readers of this professional paper will not, we surmise, desire to contribute towards the "thirty pieces of silver."

THE PROFESSIONAL UNION OF TRAINED NURSES.

SOMETHING YOU CAN DO IN YOUR HOLIDAYS.

The Handicrafts' Guild of the Professional Union of Trained Nurses, 62, Oxford Street, London, W. 1, proposes to hold an Exhibition and Sale of Christmas Gifts in October. Of course, every member will wish to send some contribution to make it a success!

Please make, or buy, or ask your friends for something pretty, uncommon, or useful, during your holidays.

Needlework, baskets, books, pictures, jam, anything and everything may be sent.

Come and inspect, or write to the Guild if at any time in need of dainty gifts. It is always open to orders, or to receive saleable things.

MAUDE MACCALLUM,

Hon. Secretary.

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