

three Nurses' Registration Bills before Parliament, and had brought all the Societies promoting Registration into line in support of one Bill, was sincerely anxious to arrive at agreement with the College of Nursing also, in spite of the fact that it was drafting a Bill of its own. Had the governors of the College of Nursing had sufficient wisdom to take the hand extended to it, and having given its adhesion to the principle of Nurses' Registration, determined to support the measure before Parliament, drafted and supported by the British Medical Association and all the Nurses' Organisations associated together in support of Registration, how different would have been the history of Nursing in the United Kingdom during the last seven years.

Sir Arthur Stanley and his advisers did not adopt that course, but promoted a Bill of their own, of which seven drafts are extant, copies of which are filed in the archives of the National Council of Trained Nurses.

The Central Committee still persevered with its endeavour to come to an agreement, but ultimately the negotiations did not result in a conjoint Bill, and on October 21st, 1916, the following Resolution was adopted by the Central Committee:— "That the Central Committee regrets it cannot recede from the position it has taken up, and fully communicated to Mr. Stanley in the letter of September 30th, and it has therefore determined to proceed with its own Bill."

The trouble was that the College of Nursing, Ltd., wished its Council to act as the Governing Body of the Nursing Profession, while the Central Committee stood firm for the establishment of an independent Governing Body appointed under the authority of the State, such as was eventually appointed under the Nurses' Registration Acts of 1919.

Nevertheless, although negotiations had been broken off, the Central Committee amended its Bill, incorporating as far as possible such clauses as had been agreed upon between the two bodies. The Central Committee further issued a Statement concerning the negotiations entered into between the Central Committee and the College, with the object of drafting an agreed Bill showing why agreement had not been reached.

#### HOW THE COLLEGE CAPTURED THE NURSES.

How were nurses induced to join the College? Firstly, if a nurse knows that it will please her Matron if she adopts a certain line of action, the probability is that she will consider it expedient to do so; and, secondly, it built up its membership on the foundation laid by those who had worked so long for State Registration, by giving a pledge which these pioneers would never give, because they knew well that they could not redeem it.

#### PLEDGING PARLIAMENT.

We have Sir Arthur Stanley's own statement as to the overwhelming feeling of nurses of all grades in favour of Registration. The College of Nursing, Ltd., therefore proceeded to circulate a leaflet in which it stated:—

"Every Certificated Trained Nurse should apply at once for Registration by the College of Nursing."

Why?

"Because the Council of the College of Nursing has drafted a 'Nurses' Registration Bill' which provides that the Register already formed by the College of Nursing shall be the first Register under the Act. If, therefore, you are on the College Register, you will automatically, and without further fee, be placed on the State Register when the 'Nurses' Registration Bill' is passed."

These leaflets were widely circulated in the hospitals, and through the Joint War Committee at 83, Pall Mall, through which large numbers of nurses were passing at that time, and where they lay on the table inscribed "Take one."

The pledge that nurses would be placed on the State Register "automatically" was a particularly subtle one, because many nurses feared that the entrance to the State Register would be through a State Examination.

Miss M. S. Rundle, Secretary of the College Company, also wrote in a Nurses' League Journal in 1916:—

"It has been decided" (presumably by the College Council) "that a nurse whose name is on the College Register on the passing of the Act becomes at once a State Registered Nurse, and that no other fee shall be required of her than the fee of one guinea which she paid when accepted as a member of the College."

#### THE CHARTER OF THE ROYAL BRITISH NURSES' ASSOCIATION.

But the "stigma" of the word "Limited" still rankled, and the governors of the College conceived the brilliant idea that they could not only remove that stigma, but could gain the prestige and stability conferred by the possession of a Royal Charter if they could induce the Royal British Nurses' Association to amalgamate with the College Company. An agreement was, in fact, entered into for such amalgamation, and confirmed at a meeting of R.B.N.A. members on Jan. 18th, 1917, when Mr. Herbert Paterson, F.R.C.S., invited those present to pluck the ripe and luscious fruit now dangling before their eyes. He pointed out, however, that "until the R.B.N.A. and the College of Nursing had ceased to exist, and the Royal British College of Nursing had risen triumphantly from the ashes of both, pledges could not be given in black and white. But they had had a letter from Mr. Stanley and Sir Cooper Perry, agreeing to their conditions, and he thought they could trust these gentlemen to feel in honour bound to see that the wishes of the Association were carried out."

"They welcomed their colleagues from the College with open arms, and hoped that the two bodies would live together in *sooly* love and honesty, working together in a common cause."

Professor Glaister, a member of the Council of the College of Nursing, Ltd., came from the North "to assist at the wedding ceremony," which drew from a member the remark that "they had been

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