

able and conciliatory, but this did not suit the controllers of the College, and he was discharged (it was rumoured in the Lobby of the House as if he had been a second footman), and Mr. (now, of course, Sir) Leonard Lyle was placed in charge of the College interests.

DISGRACEFUL COLLEGE TACTICS.

The disgraceful tactics by which the College Caucus endeavoured to wreck the Bill, well knowing that an opportunity might not again occur for many years for the passing of a Nurses' Registration Bill, and reckless of the consequences to the sick public and to nurses, cannot be too severely condemned.

The Report stage of the Central Committee's Bill was put down for (but not reached on) Friday, May 9th, and the College of Nursing, Ltd., through its Secretary, Miss M. S. Rundle, issued a letter to its nurse-members inviting them to wreck the Bill at this stage. Miss Rundle wrote:—

"What the Council wants you to do WITHOUT DELAY is to write to any M.P. you know, or the M.P. for the place in which you reside, and have, or might have, a vote, and to beg him earnestly NOT TO SUPPORT THE BILL. . . . The matter is very pressing."

COLLEGE BILL IN THE LORDS.

In the meantime the managers of the College of Nursing took steps to have their Bill—which so far had not been introduced into either House—presented in the House of Lords by Viscount Goschen, Treasurer of Guy's Hospital. The mask was off. The College of Nursing, Ltd., was no longer pretending to help the Nurses' Registration Bill, and the battle for the emancipation of the Nursing Profession was fought out without further camouflage.

What the College did was to take advantage of all the work which had been accomplished by the Registration pioneers. It hoped to secure the passage of its own Bill, or, if not, then to get both Bills referred, on an equality to a Select Committee, when the chances of the Central Committee's Bill being passed during the Session would have been at an end, and although it had been successfully piloted through its most critical stages, it would have had to begin again *de novo* in another Session, assuming that it got another chance, which was very improbable.

Though, therefore, the rejection of the College of Nursing Bill was moved by Lord Amptill in a masterly speech, Lord Crewe argued that their Lordships were in the difficulty that they had not yet before them the other Bill, which ought to reach them soon after Whitsuntide, and to pronounce an opinion either for or against this Bill appeared to him an almost impossible course to take. He therefore advocated giving the College Bill a Second Reading, but added that this did not imply any recognition of its superiority.

Lord Sandhurst, on behalf of the Government, supported this course and the Bill was accordingly read a second time.

WRECKING THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE'S BILL IN THE COMMONS.

Lord Crewe, however, had not reckoned with the animus of the promoters of the College of Nursing, Ltd., towards the Central Committee's Bill.

Mr. Leonard Lyle (Chairman of Queen Mary's Hospital, Stratford), had been entrusted by the College Caucus, as we have seen, with the wrecking policy decided upon, and associated with him were four members of Divisions of Manchester, Lieut.-Commander Astbury (Salford W.), Major G. B. Hurst (Mosside), Major J. Nall (Hulme), and Mr. A. Hailwood (Ardwick), instructed by the officials of the Royal Infirmary, Manchester.

The policy of these Members was to block the Bill on the Report Stage by putting down wrecking amendments, through which they successfully obstructed it, by long and irrelevant speeches, and had not Dr. Addison, then Minister of Health, come forward and given a pledge that he would bring in a Nurses' Registration Bill at the earliest possible time, on behalf of the Government, the public and the nurses might still be awaiting the protection which such an Act should afford.

Major Barnett made it quite clear that if the Bill failed it was none of his doing, but "the result of organised and concerted obstruction" by the College of Nursing, Ltd. He declined to commit hari-kari by withdrawing the Bill, and the Central Committee's Bill remained No. 1 Bill on the Order Paper until the Government Act was placed on the Statute Book in December, 1919.

THE GOVERNMENT BILL.

On November 6th the Right Hon. Christopher Addison, M.P., P.C., M.D., Minister of Health, redeemed his pledge by introducing into the House of Commons a Government Bill for the State Registration of Nurses in England and Wales, to which his authority was limited. Similar Bills were introduced for Scotland and Ireland, and all three received the Royal Assent on December 23rd, 1919.

Thanks to the courtesy of the Marquess of Lincolnshire crimson benches of the Lords were placed at the disposal of the women who had accomplished this far-reaching national reform, and nothing can minimise the thrill of emotion and delight experienced by the trained nurses, whose high privilege it was to be present on this historic occasion, when, with dignified ceremonial, the King's Will was proclaimed in the quaint old Norman French—"Le Roy le Veult"—in which the three Nurses' Registration Acts received the Royal Assent.

This week closes the glimpse at the thirty years' struggle for legal status for Trained Nurses, in the United Kingdom, the complete history of which is recorded in the sixty volumes of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING published during the period in which I have been the active Editor. Next week I shall begin the history of the General Nursing Council for England and Wales, quoting from official documents which have been carefully filed.

ETHEL G. FENWICK.

(To be continued.)

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