

champions of law and order (now on strike) returning to exercise, with the approval of Sir Alfred Mond (the Minister), absolute control over the Nursing Profession.

I refused to commit *hari-hari*.

Then Sir Arthur said he must warn me that there was only one alternative for the Minister. He might have to move to repeal the Nurses' Registration Act.

"That he will not do," I said, meaning, of course, "shall not."

"But I must warn you that he will have no other alternative."

"He has power to dissolve the Council. Why not exercise that power?"

"I can assure you the Minister has considered the matter in all its bearings."

"Hardly," I replied. "He has only heard one side. The constitutional members of the Council have never been communicated with. They have a right to be heard."

With this Sir Arthur agreed. He would ask them to attend. I gave him the names of the five members of the Council who, with myself, had remained at the post of duty, and thereupon departed. Nothing doing.

A few days later, nearly two months after the "stab in the back," these members attended at the Ministry and very plainly expressed their indignation at the conduct of affairs. But they realised that their opinions and arguments were of little weight.

In vulgar parlance, Mond—of a race extraordinarily susceptible to social influence—had been got at.

The anti-College group, the working nurses' representatives, were to be crushed out at all costs.

Matters were becoming serious in the conduct of business. Mr. Priestley still retained the power with myself of signing cheques, as appointed by the Council to do. Expenditure depended on Registration Fees, and as the Council was not functioning no fees were available. I went to the Ministry and placed the matter before Sir Arthur Robinson (knowing that the Registrar was reporting privately the financial affairs of the Council without the knowledge of the Finance Committee). I consented to sign cheques for salaries, &c., so long as the Council had available funds in the bank, otherwise the routine work of the Council for the benefit of the nurses would be stultified, and I informed the Ministry that I would not sign any cheque if it entailed using money deposited in the bank as fees for Registration which did not belong to the Council.

This action compelled the Minister to either dissolve the Council—which power he possessed under the Act—and permit the nurses to elect a new Council, or to appoint a new Chairman.

He, of course, chose the latter alternative, as nothing was further from "College" policy for the moment than to hold an election until it had packed the electorate, and its representatives were secure of being returned to control our miserable destinies.

We were well aware that during what Sir Jenner Verrall called "the restful interregnum" meetings and plottings were in constant session, and that a series of tricky amendments to the Rules were ready to carry a dictatorship into force.

THE NEW CHAIRMAN.

On January 26th the Press contained the following announcement:—

The Minister of Health has appointed Sir Wilmot Parker Herringham, K.C.M.G., C.B., M.D., F.R.C.P., to be Chairman of the General Nursing Council for England and Wales, in succession to Mr. J. C. Priestley, K.C., resigned.

And then it became known that the whole flock who had followed Mr. Priestley into the wilderness—and who had treated the Nursing Profession with contumely—had left him *planté*, and were prepared to return to office, and with the help of the Minister, to fetter our professional liberties, for years to come!

When I was three years old my widowed mother married Mr. George Storer, of Thoroton Hall, Notts—Lord of the Manor of Hawkesworth—who took her three children to his bosom with ardent affection.

Sir Wilmot Herringham's father was at that date Rector of Hawkesworth—a charming man. He was later a Canon of Wells.

Looking back sixty years, I remember Wilmot Herringham, a coarse-fibred little boy—who, nevertheless, was welcomed at Thoroton—and shared with us the delight of riding a dapple grey rocking horse in the hall, before the days when we raced through the Vale of Belvoir after hounds—on dapple grey ponies. Lovely, free, delightful days—past in a flash.

At St. Bartholomew's Hospital we occasionally met—and now and then in the next thirty years—but *my* life's work was the organisation of my profession by the State, work in which Dr. (later Sir Wilmot) Herringham had never shown a glimmer of interest.

That, however, is the history of women's professional evolution.

We hoped for the best. But . . .

LIONS AND LAMBS RE-ASSEMBLE.

On Friday, February 3rd, 1922, the Council was summoned to meet, as usual at the Ministry of Health.

There was no communication to this Statutory Council from the Minister of Health informing it of the appointment of a new Chairman, or the withdrawal of resignations of the irresponsible majority.

A grave lack of courtesy to the Nursing Profession, which was quite unpardonable.

We read the Minutes of November 18th, and did the routine business.

My motion to amend the First Schedule and insert the word "Certificate" in the Qualification Column of the published Register, was unanimously agreed, owing to the expressed indignation of hundreds of organized nurses.

A really providential provision since the Chapple "modification"!

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