

A MODERN VERSION OF THE BABES IN THE WOOD.

THE ROBBERS COME TO BLOWS.

We have received from Dr. W. A. Chapple, M.P., the following copy of correspondence which has taken place between him and the Honble. Sir Arthur Stanley, Chairman of the College of Nursing, Ltd. It is vastly instructive:—

June 22nd, 1923.

DEAR DR. CHAPPLE,—Thanks for your letter in answer to mine. You have evidently missed the point of my letter. What I pointed out was that anyone reading your speech could only conclude from it that the Council of the College of Nursing was in favour of the amendments which you were bringing before the House. I read your speech over several times myself and it is the only possible conclusion to be drawn from it, whereas you know perfectly well that the Council of the College of Nursing was entirely opposed to the proposals which you were making.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) ARTHUR STANLEY.

W. A. Chapple, Esq., M.P.

1, Horseferry Road, S.W.1.

June 27th, 1923.

DEAR SIR ARTHUR STANLEY,—I have your letter, and think that you must have forgotten that you wrote me in December last asking me to come and see you and discuss with you the question of the nurses, which I did on December 5th. I understood you then to be strongly in favour of the position set out in your letter to the Nursing Council, urging that existing nurses should have access to the Register, no matter how their "knowledge and experience had been obtained."

Following this interview, I sent you a copy of the amendment to the Rules, as it had been considered by the Medical Committee, and asked you if you would let me know if it met your views, or if you had any comment to make. As you did not reply I concluded that in your view it amply provided for existing nurses in the way the Act contemplated, and I was further confirmed in this interpretation of your silence when I read in the *Nursing Mirror* of March 24th, 1923, your admirable statement of the views of the Nursing College Council, and the strong appeal you made to the General Nursing Council on behalf of the measure of justice to existing nurses, which the Act provides; and without which it would never have passed into law, nor would I have sponsored it for so many years in the House of Commons.

A deputation of Registered Nurses belonging to the Nursing College, weighed as nothing with me, in the face of your apparent satisfaction with my letter and with the amendment as it appeared subsequently in the *British Medical Journal* (and which, with minor alterations, is now law) and of your admirable letter to the General Nursing Council discussed by them three months ago and never withdrawn nor modified. Why should it

be? It was too excellent, too just, and too loyal to the Act.

I took little notice of the Registered Nurses' views. They wholly missed the point that legislators hold in high respect when dealing with Registration Acts.

No less than four deputations of nurses waited on the Medical Committee and some of them were frank enough to admit that their object in opposing my amendment was to keep down competition in the nursing profession and to provide against nurses who had had no hospital training earning the same fees as those who had.

This does not appeal to those who have the responsible duty of legislating equitably and according to invariable precedent, and of providing in Registration Acts a measure of recognition to those earning their livelihood *bona fide*, under the pre-existing régime.

Yours very sincerely,

W. A. CHAPPLE.

SICK PUBLIC BETRAYED.

This correspondence corroborates our statement made on several occasions that the College began the attack upon the minority qualification for admittance to the General Part of the Register, and that Dr. Chapple, unknown to the nurses' organisations and the Registered Nurses, privately agreed with Sir Arthur Stanley to lead the attack through the Parliamentary Medical Committee in the House of Commons. Dr. Chapple is quite frank in his contempt for the opinion of the members of the profession to be legislated for—we learn the deputation of Registered Nurses belonging to the College, "weighed as nothing with me!" The *volte face* of the College Chairman should not astonish Dr. Chapple. Surely he has not so soon forgotten the *seven drafts* of the College Registration Bill and the tricky conduct of business during negotiations for unanimity between it and the Central Committee! We blame him the more after this experience for betraying the interests of the sick public together with those of the Registered Nurses.

NO PROVISION FOR UNTRAINED *BONA FIDE* NURSES IN CENTRAL COMMITTEE'S BILL.

The Bill sponsored by Dr. Chapple for the Central Registration Committee, and introduced by him on March 3rd, 1914, made no provision whatever for the registration of untrained *bona fide* nurses, so that he is in error. He did sponsor a Bill which excluded *bona fide* nurses without any training. Under the heading "Provision for Existing Nurses" the 1914 Bill provided Section 11, "that any person who within three years from the commencement of this Act claims to be registered thereunder shall be so registered, provided such person is at least twenty-one years of age, and is of good character, and (4) produces evidence satisfactory to the Council of training prescribed by the rules framed under the provisions of this Act, and has, in addition, been for at least three years in *bona fide* practice as a nurse, or employed as a nurse in a naval or military hospital."

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