

interests. The Council will elect the President and the Vice-Presidents, as those offices become vacant.

The Council of the College will also appoint Lecturers, Teachers, Inspectors, and Examiners, and all of these appointments will be well paid. Registered Nurses appointed to these positions will, of course, be restricted to Fellows and Members of the College.

In general terms, the College will be firstly an Educational and Examining body, to afford instruction to nurses in professional subjects, and various specialties. Secondly, it will hold Preliminary and Post Graduate Examinations for the Diplomas of the College, so as to distinguish those who have been registered by the General Nursing Council as proficient, for the higher appointments in hospitals and other institutions. Or for the valuable appointments of the College itself.

The next object of the College will be the protection of its Fellows and Members, and the improvement of their general conditions, especially with regard to assistance in sickness, accident or old age. With regard to the former object, the experience of all other professions has proved that, as soon as they were properly constituted and duly recognised by the State, their members have become subject to charges of malpractices, or 'defamation of character. In the case of women like nurses, the majority of whom have very small financial resources, and often but little knowledge of the world, such charges in the past have often resulted in very serious consequences. The College then, would be prepared at once to deal with any such charge brought against a Member or Fellow, under the best legal advice, and in the case of an action being brought, would be prepared in suitable cases to contest that action in a Court of Law, thereby not only saving the nurse probably large expense, but almost certainly giving her protection such as she could not afford to obtain through her own efforts.

We are pleased to learn that the Founders of the College have studied the history of similar successful institutions wisely, in another matter. Especially in this old country, the ceremonial side of the proceedings of an Institution possesses no little moral and social effect. And the Nursing Profession is still so youthful—inasmuch as its recognition by the State only took place in 1919—that none of the ceremonial customs which have grown up around the older professions have yet been even considered in this calling. So we learn with great pleasure that the College will, at once, commence, and in due course elaborate, various customs which experience has proved to be commendable.

For example, it is provided by the Trust Deed that every Meeting of the Council or any of its Committees shall be opened with Prayers, as is the historic custom of the Houses of Lords and Commons and many other ancient bodies in this country. Then, every Fellow or Member of the College will be admitted as such, with due ceremony, at a meeting of the whole Council. Each one will be required to take a solemn Oath and Undertaking of professional and personal conduct, and of loyal obedience to the regulations of the College, and will then sign the College Roll. She will then be formally presented to the President, and receive from her the Diploma of Fellowship, or Membership, to which she is entitled.

The President, Vice-Presidents, and each Member of the Council, we are informed, will be entitled to wear a special and distinctive Academic Robe; and after having served for the prescribed term of office in their respective offices, will be entitled, if they so desire, to purchase their Robes of Office and to wear them at special professional functions.

There are other very excellent provisions which we understand the College will propose to adopt, but we have said enough to show, as a commencement, how important its influence must be on the Nursing Profession of the future, and upon all those connected with it, and through them upon the sick of all classes of the community. The great financial advantages with which the College will start, and which it will obtain, if nurses are wise enough to give it their immediate and whole-hearted support, make the future success of the Institution assured.

Those who have taken part in the struggle for the higher education of nurses, their State Registration, and their professional emancipation and self government, will learn of this wonderful gift with profound thanksgiving and emotion; the only conditions being that Registered Nurses shall prove themselves able and worthy to support and govern their own College, and make it a success. *Indeed, we are able to predict that, if they are wise enough to rise to the great opportunity now given them, the British College of Nurses will become one of the most wealthy and influential bodies in this country.*

Deep gratitude to the munificent donor, and a firm determination to respond to, and be worthy of, the trust imposed on them, and to spare no pains to carry out that trust to complete fruition, will, we feel sure, animate every worthy member of the Nursing Profession.

We must also recognise that, while the movement for the higher education of nurses has had wise leaders, and faithful supporters, who would never sacrifice conscience to expediency, or future good to present gains, yet, from its inception, a Higher Power has guided its destiny, and that, even when the prospect seemed darkest, the very facts which appeared to be most adverse, have proved in the end to be the most beneficial.

It is then with high hopes that we enter upon an era of new opportunities for the Profession of Nursing. We have every hope that the prestige and status which must result from the work of an adequately endowed College of Nurses will, firstly, encourage well educated and suitable women, to enter hospitals for training, and, secondly, inspire them with a sense of personal responsibility in their chosen Profession.

The most potent benefit resulting from this magnificent gift is that it gives the nurses power to develop their valuable work with freedom of conscience and action.

In the name of the Nursing Profession we offer most heartfelt thanks to the generous benefactor, who has, by this splendid and anonymous gift, made possible for us the fulfilment of hopes and aspirations which have hitherto belonged to the world of dreams.

As soon as the complete Council has been nominated by the Trustees further information will be available, for nurses and the public, from 431, Oxford Street, London, W. 1.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)