

and be giving eighty Pensions to Fellows and Members, so that you can realise what an enormously rich Pension Fund it will become as time goes on, and how largely it will be able to meet the crying needs of those Fellows and Members who may need assistance in old age or distress.

Now, Ladies, please let me speak very seriously. You, at this historic meeting, as representing the nurses who have joined this College all over the British Empire, have obtained a unique, unprecedented opportunity for self-help and professional development, for not only assisting yourselves, but for carrying out work of national importance in the improvement of your profession. You have, in fact, obtained great Privileges, but please remember that Privileges do not only mean Benefit, but involve Responsibility. You have taken, each one of you, the Solemn Obligation wisely required from every Fellow and Member of this College, and which in its essentials is founded upon the ancient Oath of Hippocrates to the Physicians and Surgeons of ancient days. It is, therefore, your duty to make this College—of which you are now Foundation Fellows and Members—a great and abiding success. You can, each one of you, bring your friends into its Membership or Fellowship, if they are duly qualified to obtain those privileges; and I venture to say that it is your duty to do so. British nurses have now an Institution which gives them self-government, absolute power to manage their own affairs for themselves, and for the benefit of the public at large. If they rise to the great opportunity afforded to them, as I firmly believe they will do; if they join this College and support it in every way; they will have the proud satisfaction of knowing that they will lead nurses in other countries beyond the British Empire, to follow in their footsteps, so that their success will be world-wide in its influence. And, if they do so, I can predict that in the future this British College of Nurses will not only be universally honoured, but will be in itself the source of immense public and professional usefulness, and, moreover, that it will become one of the most powerful and wealthy professional associations in the world.

ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT MRS. BEDFORD FENWICK,

On rising to give her Presidential Address, Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, who received an enthusiastic reception, spoke as follows on the four Watchwords of the College—Knowledge, Service, Charity and Honour.

Colleagues and Friends,

The dominant note of this historic gathering is one of joy, for it is the practical demonstration of the realisation of a great hope.

As you know, owing to the wonderful generosity of an anonymous benefactor, the means have been placed in the hands of trained nurses to organise a self-governing College of Registered Members of their Profession—a profession demanding intelligence, knowledge, skill, in addition to devotion and moral rectitude—and not only to organise but to establish it on a sound economic basis upon which, by united financial support, they can build up a strong and wealthy Corporation.

There has been urgent need for a College of Nurses composed only of Registered Members of the Profession, just as Registered Medical Practitioners are organised in the Royal Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons, the Governing Bodies of which have an expert knowledge of the educational needs of their profession, and Membership and Fellowship of which carry with them prestige and honourable status.

Such prestige and status are now conferred on nurses through the British College of Nurses and it should be the aim of every trained registered nurse to possess them, and as Fellows and Members of the College to help to broaden and raise the standard of nursing education and professional solidarity.

THE WATCHWORDS.

The four Watchwords adopted by the Council, as incorporating the aims of our College, which you will find inscribed on your Diplomas, so that you may keep them always before you, are Knowledge, Service, Charity, Honour—words pregnant with obligation.

KNOWLEDGE.

We have placed Knowledge as the first of the Watchwords on these Diplomas, not because we regard it as the most important of all, but because it is the torch that must guide us in all ethical and professional matters and, in speaking of it, I would like to take it in the wide sense of Socrates when he said "Virtue is knowledge, knowledge of the good—ordered harmonised reason." Yet I would not minimise that aspect of it connected with scientific attainment and professional skill, of which in our profession Fellowship and Membership of our College, give evidence. Such knowledge is the very foundation of your highly-skilled service to the sick, to the public, and to the medical profession. It is our hope by mutual co-operation to make this College a store-house for such knowledge, where we shall have opportunity for developing every one of the many branches of study that have grouped themselves in our profession, and have become part of it since Florence Nightingale first carried the light of nursing knowledge into hospital wards at Scutari and, subsequently, through her pen, into hospitals, infirmaries, the homes of the poor, departments connected with the health of the Army, and the health of the nation at large. Since then knowledge of the treatment and care of the sick has gone far, and much scientific and beneficent achievement has resulted from searching into the unknown, through the intellect and through the senses—but to succeed in this quest, our knowledge must be permeated by inspiration and imagination, and then there will radiate from it the light of high ideals which will lead to high professional achievement. It is this knowledge which has within it vision—inspiration—imagination—which has brought you as Founder Fellows and Members into this movement. In this College, in the titular letters it grants, in the observance of the various academic customs which have grown up in similar bodies in sister professions, I want you to see not mere outward trappings and show, but to recognise in them an outward reflection and a tangible expression of all for which we desire this College to stand, in providing us with the knowledge which will equip us worthily for service.

SERVICE.

Thus is your first Watchword connected with your second. When we have sought and found knowledge, we must apply it as Service to humanity. The man (or the woman) who finds, in life, no place for Service, is merely using all his acquirements to satisfy himself,

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