

upon the essence of individual nature. And here let us realise that many persons can become useful and efficient members of committees, but very special qualities of head and heart are necessary to fill a chair efficiently. We can learn rules from handbooks, but much more than the letter of the law is required to become an expert in the conduct of public business. The sooner we begin the better, as there are now many important Statutory positions to be filled by nurses. Notably on the General Nursing Councils, the Royal British Nurses' Association, and on the Council of this College. Ignorance is a terrible spendthrift of energy and time.

Well do I remember an occasion in the House of Commons when it caused me agonised moments. In 1914 our Nurses' Registration Bill had been before the House of Commons for eleven years, and for all these years anti-registration Members, instructed by the Nursing Schools, under the eleven o'clock rule, inevitably popped up and observed, "I object," the effect of which action prevented a second reading. Then in 1914 Dr. Chapple got permission under the "ten minutes" rule to speak for that time in support of the Bill. Our object had been for years to get a division on the Measure to test the opinion of the House, which we were sure was in our favour, and this had been prevented by the "I objectors." I was the only nurse in the Ladies Gallery then a gilded cage long since swept away by ridicule. Dr. Chapple made good use of his ten minutes, then up got the nimble "antis" and spoke against Registration. Mr. Handel Booth claimed a division, just what we most ardently desired, and then Members began to leave the House. To the right they flocked, to the left they dribbled. So ignorant was I that I did not know the "Aye" from the "No" lobby, and in agony I clutched hold of an attendant: "Are they for or against," I whispered, pointing to the floor on the right. "Are you for or against, madam," he asked. "Oh! for," I replied. "Then you may take from me you've won 'ands down."

And so we had; from that time State Registration of Nurses was inevitable, and was in force a few years later. Ignorance had given me a well-deserved shock!

Synopsis of Lesson I.

Mrs. Fenwick then spoke of Organisation by Parliament and the Constitution of Statutory Bodies. She said in the Nursing Profession under Acts of Parliament, the General Nursing Councils (and she was proud of having created this title) were Statutory Bodies for the government of the Nursing Profession.

The Royal British Nurses' Association also had the honourable status of a Statutory Body by Royal Charter.

The College of Nursing, Ltd., was organised under the Companies Acts by the Board of Trade, a system not calculated to confer much prestige. It was now applying for a Royal Charter.

The British College of Nurses was organised under a Trust Deed to control the Endowment Fund of £100,000, and no doubt when they had won their spurs they would receive some form of Statutory recognition.

The composition of the Councils of these bodies made self-government of the profession possible, but through the lack of knowledge of procedure the nurses had shown a sad lack of intelligent comprehension of the government of their own professional affairs.

As a member of the first General Nursing Council, Mrs. Fenwick said she was amazed at the ignorance, and, in consequence, the diffidence of the majority of her colleagues on the Council, which resulted in mal-administration by a few unsympathetic persons who encouraged an intolerable bureaucracy, and necessitated a constant and tenacious policy of opposition upon the part of a small minority of nurses in their efforts for the organisation and rights of

Registered Nurses granted them by Parliament. Mrs. Fenwick spoke of making a Constitution, of framing Articles of Association and Rules.

Of the composition of Committees, and the duties of the chief officers, the chairman, treasurer and secretary. She advocated the necessity for the closest association between the chair and the secretary, proving how necessary it was for them to carefully consider and prepare together details of business to be brought before a committee. Of the relations of the chair and members of committee, to maintain the harmony of debate; the utmost courtesy should be maintained between them. Members should stand when addressing the Chair, and if occupied by a woman, "Madam Chair," instead of "Mr. Chairman" should be the title used. Every member of a committee should be encouraged to take part in its deliberations, tersely and without repetition; an efficient chairman proved her quality by getting through the business in record time without "snuffing out" individual speakers.

To accelerate business, Standing Committees and sub-committees were usually elected which met and reported to the Council or Board.

Agenda Paper.

An Agenda Paper, stating the items of business to be considered by the committee, should be sent out signed by the secretary ten days in advance of the meeting, and was generally inscribed in the following order.

1. *Minutes*.—These are minute records from notes carefully taken at the previous meeting by the secretary. To write concise and correct Minutes was an art and required practice. They were read by the secretary, and if approved as correct, were signed by the chair, with date of meeting.

2. *Business arising from the Minutes*.—The chair reported result of action referred from previous meeting.

3. *Correspondence*.—This was often an important item. Letters addressed to the chair and committee should be read and receive courteous consideration, and the secretary be instructed what to reply. An organisation which did not attract correspondence from members, etc., cannot be considered in a really healthy condition. It proved a lack of interest upon their part. Correspondence should be encouraged, and the frame of mind of a chairman who on receiving a letter with which he did not agree and moved that "it lie upon the table," which meant that it should not be considered, proved him totally unfitted by narrow and autocratic temper to preside over public business. Really efficient committees seldom received a letter which could not be courteously received and considered, and a reverse policy usually meant that the chairman and committee could not justify themselves in a reply, and thus resorted to despotism.

It should be a rule that a courteous reply should be sent to every correspondent by the Secretary.

4. *Reports of Standing and Sub-Committees*.—These reports should be presented by the chairman of such committees, and contain all essential recommendations. They should be carefully considered by the Committee, amended if necessary, and approved or rejected.

5. *Resolutions, Amendments, Riders*.—Resolutions are sometimes termed motions, and the text should appear in full on the Agenda Paper. The Chairman calls upon the proposer to speak to the resolution, and then on the seconder to add arguments in favour.

The Resolution is then before the Meeting for discussion and amendment if required. The construction of Amendments must *amend* the resolutions to which they refer, they must not contradict them. They should be handed

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