

College, London, and later Professor of Astronomy at Oxford, where the fame of a model of the moon brought him to the notice of the King.

In 1662 Wren became Surveyor-General of the King's Works, and thereon began to receive many important commissions. The first of these were the Pembroke Chapel, Cambridge, and the Sheldonian Theatre, Oxford. During the Plague and the Great Fire he visited Paris, but hardly had the fire abated when he was back making a survey of the ruins, and in a few days produced a plan for the rebuilding of the City which is noteworthy as being two or three hundred years in advance of the period in which he was living. This scheme included four splendid avenues ninety feet wide and, as Major Rigg suggested, the traffic problem would have been much less pressing to-day had his plans been adopted.

The City Churches were rebuilt and it is significant that, in the erection of so many of those, Wren never once repeated himself. He had a faculty for gathering about him the best men in the arts and crafts connected with architecture. His master mason was Strong, his master carpenter was Jennings, his sculptors and carvers were Cibber and Grinling Gibbons, his master iron-worker Jean Tijou, and the schools of craftsmen under them give us some understanding of how one man was able to design and superintend, not only the building of a Cathedral, but also the building of many churches, the new wing at Hampton Court, Greenwich Hospital, Chelsea Hospital and many other works. Wren lived through six reigns as well as through the Commonwealth, and was a great favourite of Charles II.

When St. Paul's Cathedral was to be rebuilt, there were long and heated disputes on its style. At last Wren got an amended plan accepted which gave to the Cathedral both a dome and a spire; it was an ugly plan, but Wren possessed a faculty for diplomacy. He managed to get an interview with the King, who declared that he could not overrule the decision of the Commissioners entrusted with the business relating to the building of the Cathedral. Wren did, however, get permission from Charles to alter "details" where he considered it necessary, and he certainly interpreted this permission in a very wide sense indeed. It is said that he improvised in architecture just as Sebastian Bach improvised in sound; his imagination was so pure that he may be said to have spun his Cathedral like a web. "The Almighty makes excellent spiders of those to whom He gives a great intellect," and Wren may really be said to have designed his Cathedral as it grew. He knew it so well that in his eightieth year, when directing restorations, he climbed over it all like some cat burglar and is said to have predicted that, about the present time, its fabric would require considerable attention.

As regards his plans for the rebuilding of the City, if he had had his way, London would have been a modern Ephesus and a walk down Fleet Street the greatest thrill in the town. It is interesting to note that Wren's salary when he was building St. Paul's was £4 a week and later was cut down to £2 a week because the Commissioners thought he did not work fast enough. He lived in an age of corruption, but Wren's integrity has never been challenged nor has a word ever been said against his private life. After he retired from the Surveyorship he used to visit St. Paul's once a year and, sitting under his dome, enjoy his own great creation. His last visit to it was in 1723, and he died the night after, sitting in his chair, with no illness and no pain. Death was to him just an incident in Time, as Time is an incident in Eternity.

The members of the Ramblers' Club found the lecture of special interest after having spent an afternoon among the Wren relics; perhaps this accounted for the fact that there were many questions from the audience at the close of the address.

A PROTEST FROM THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

The following letter has been forwarded by the Executive Committee of the Association to Dr. Barrie Lambert, Chairman of the Central Public Health Committee of the London County Council, in relation to the adoption, by that Committee, of a recommendation to employ unregistered nurses as departmental Sisters.

Royal British Nurses Association,
194, Queen's Gate, S.W.7,
23rd December, 1932.

Dr. F. Barrie Lambert,
Chairman,
Central Public Health Committee,
London County Council,
County Hall,
Westminster, S.W.1.

DEAR MADAM,

At a Meeting held on 16th inst., the Executive Committee of this Corporation took strong exception to the resolution of the Central Public Health Committee providing that "applicants for the position of Departmental Sister (massage, X-ray and electrical departments) who are not State Registered Nurses but are otherwise suitably qualified be eligible for appointment to any of those positions on the appropriate salary scale provided for in Regulation 631."

My Committee take objection to the Recommendation on the following grounds:—

(a) They hold the view that, in the housekeeping departments and in the departments directly referred to in the above quoted Recommendation, it is highly important, in the interests of the sick, that State Registered Nurses should be in control.

(b) In the opinion of my Committee the Recommendation not only fails to take full advantage of the protection, privileges and opportunities which the Nurses Registration Act (1919) gives to the sick and to the nurses, but it places specialists, without general training, in economic competition with women who have qualified themselves by years of strenuous training and by examination for admission to the State Register. It is to be remembered that there is already strong feeling among State Registered Nurses that they still have to meet with much unjustifiable competition from the partially qualified, and Members of this Association feel that, by its adoption of the Recommendation, the Central Public Health Committee of the London County Council places Registered Nurses at a still greater disadvantage and minimises the protection which should accrue to them under their Act. They contend that no such liberty would be taken with the interests, professional and economic, of the medical profession as to place unqualified practitioners in control of departments for medical treatment. Furthermore, the nurses hold that, in effect, the resolution of your Committee is contrary to the spirit and intentions of their Act.

My Committee would also be glad to know upon what grounds the London County Council finds justification for giving the title of Sister to specialists who are not Registered Nurses. This title has for long been regarded as a specially honourable one because it has been reserved for women of high qualifications and administrative ability; naturally they resent the Council's proposal to confer it upon those who are not nurses in the eyes either of the State or of their own profession.

It may possibly be argued that there are not a sufficient number of Nurses who hold qualifications suitable for posts of the kind referred to, but with the amount of material at the disposal of the General, and certain special Hospitals, and in view of the proposed extension of the term of training by the London County Council, we consider that there can be no insuperable obstacle to placing opportunities for such specialised training at the disposal of the Nurses.

My Executive Committee earnestly hope that your Committee will give these considerations your attention and that the London County Council will refrain from perpetrating what the Nurses regard as a very great injustice and evidence of a lack of recognition and appreciation of the services they give at all times to their country and to the municipalities.

I am,
Yours very truly,
(Signed) ISABEL MACDONALD,
Secretary.

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