

in drawing up the Syllabus and in determining the standard of Examinations, due regard had to be paid to things as they were at the time of the passing of the Act, and the standard was, therefore, and still is, very moderate.

2. The second reason was that the Council have no power under the Act to set up the "Special" Register which had been suggested.

3. In response to the plea that the Council has power to set up another Supplementary Register—the reply has been that:—

(1) The one portal examination for all parts of the Register is the Preliminary State Examination, which it was admitted this class would not be able to pass, and

(2) That the Nurses on the Supplementary Registers are not an inferior type of General Nurse, but are specially and fully trained in their several branches of work."

As a result of the Conference the following resolution was passed unanimously:—

"That no Supplementary Part of the Registers should be set up for Nurses for the Chronic Sick."

The Chairman was warmly thanked for her courtesy in having invited the nurses to express their views on this very important question, and she in her turn said that the Resolution would be a great help to her and to the General Nursing Council. The result of the meeting was considered satisfactory by the delegates for they had reason to consider that, as a *Nurse* and Chairman of the Council, she would adhere to the "helpful" resolution of the Conference. Certainly no one had a better right or a stronger position to defend the Registered Nurses and the integrity of the Act. But somehow, somewhere, and at sometime she has apparently changed her policy, and is now in favour, not only of having the chronic sick nursed by the half-qualified, but has gone farther and holds the latter to be qualified to nurse the sick generally.

We know nothing of when this change of policy on her part and the Council's took place. The first information that the Registered Nurses received that the Resolution which was to be so "helpful," had been discarded and the considered opinion of the Conference ignored, is in a letter, not addressed to the Registered Nurses—they have received no direct information at all of what was taking place—but they have to learn the decision of the Council arrived at *in camera*, through a letter to a third party—a letter to the Minister of Health. Thus do they hear, as late as possible, the decision of the Council and of its willingness to institute a Roll for the half-qualified. So much for "sitting *in camera*"—it has become a sort of chorus of late that phrase in the interludes and stages of modern nursing history. Anyhow we find that it is always in the silence it imposes, in the darkness it implies, that each surrender takes place. Perhaps the soporific which is named "control" was applied to the Nurses on the Council while "sitting *in camera*" to drowse the eyes and conscience of those whom we had hoped would defend the purity of our Professional Act.

Just here we might give an example that came before us but a day or two ago as to the value of the "control,"

which is made the excuse (as put forward as a safeguard) for capitulation. A Medical Officer talking to one of his Health Visitors, on the Inter-Departmental Committee's Report, said: "The new Bill will be *most* useful. The Nurses on the Roll will possess enough training to enable them to become Health Visitors, when they have taken the full Midwifery Qualification and the Health Visitors' Certificate." And so other standards are to fall and posts hitherto, in most cases, open to Registered Nurses only, are to be made available for the half qualified. So much for "control."

A PROTEST RECORDED.

We do not wish to labour the point unduly, but, as a professional journal, we must place on record our strong condemnation of the procedure that has been adopted by the Council in arriving at the decision which they have communicated to the Minister. Before they did so we consider that it was a courtesy and a duty due to the Nurses on the Register from the Chairman of the Council to call the Conference again, even if she had nothing better to report than capitulation, even indeed if her remarks were destined to take the form of an Apologia rather than an explanation. Instead she has elected to treat the Conference with contumely if not with something worse.

AN EVASION:

There is another matter, more or less of the same colouring, which helps to indicate the manner in which this business has been carried through. In reply to a Resolution sent up from the Royal British Nurses' Association in February last, the Chairman informs the Association, through the Registrar, that the Council has not received any request to set up a Roll of nurses of inferior qualification, nor have they received notice that it is the intention of the Minister of Health to extend the powers of the Nurses' Registration Act in the way suggested in the Resolution. We regard this reply as an evasion for the Council, as will be noted from the correspondence referred to at the commencement of our Editorial, decided upon their policy without receiving a request from the Minister such as, it is implied, would lead to their consideration of the suggestion contained in the Recommendation of the Inter-Departmental Committee. Further comment is superfluous. Anyhow, the Council did not wait for any "request" and not only "stood consenting," but were prompt to assist in the proposal to de-grade the Nurses' Registration Act, and to divert its original purpose.

CONFUSION MOST CONFOUNDED.

Just in a few words we would make reference to the pious condition imposed towards the end of the letter, from the Council to the Minister, on the "Reservation" (concession we might more correctly call it), which is signed by the four nurses appointed to the Inter-Departmental Committee. No wonder that Mrs. Norman, Barrister-at-Law, described this Reservation as "silly." No doubt the reference to it in the letter was accorded as a sop to the nurses on the Council, it gives an appearance of yielding something by the others, Mephisto smiled from behind. What does the "Reservation" amount to? These half trained women are to be called Registered Invalid Attendants and

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