

Paragraph 11 makes the astounding assertion that the Bill of the Central Committee has been before Parliament for many years and made no substantial progress. This sort of statement does the College more harm than anything else, for it causes indignation at the absence in it of any sense of justice. The Bill promoted by the Society for the State Registration of Nurses was passed by the House of Lords in 1908, and in 1914 the Central Committee's agreed Bill was accepted for its second reading by the House of Commons by the large majority of 229 votes. It was the truce called on the outbreak of the war that postponed further action, just as victory was in sight. It is only fair now to state that it was the opposition of the majority of the present members of the College Council that formed a factor in the delay in getting the measure through previously. And now the Circular asks the Nursing Profession to "leave the Council of the College free to promote its Bill in whatever form may seem most likely to conduce to its speedy acceptance by Parliament." In fact, "Peace at any Price," or "a Bill however Bad."

Paragraphs 13 and 14 make one difference between the methods of the College and the Central Committee very clear. The College gets its nurses to join before the Rules are even made which they will have to obey. The Central Committee supporters say "No pigs in pokes for us. When we have had a voice in the framing of the Rules and know what they are, and the Register has the backing of the State, then we will join, knowing the profession can give whole-hearted support to a measure founded on freedom and on justice."

The Circular shows all through that the College is afraid of the Petition, of the influence it will have on a Parliament which is determined to uphold the rights of the workers. This fear of the College is very encouraging for us, and we can only say, go on getting in as many signatures as you can; they will be as convincing as our guns are in France.

The College has said a good deal lately about its desire for agreement. But it does nothing towards obtaining the conjoint Bill which was the object it undertook to promote, and to which the Central Committee has been faithful.

If it desires agreement let it fulfil the promises it has already made. The trusting in future promises until the old ones are redeemed can only be regarded as a form of drug-taking—a lulling into false security.

We deny the suggestion made in the Circular that the object of all State Registration is

merely to "expedite the time when Nurses can individually take part in electing their own Council." Ours is a much wider and more statesmanlike aim. We are working to promote legislation which shall establish the status and promote the effectiveness of the profession, and thus prove to be a lasting benefit to those who come after us.

NURSES' PETITION TO THE PRIME MINISTER.

Trained Nurses who wish to help to make the Rules they will have to obey should a Nurses' Registration Act be enforced, should sign the Petition to the Prime Minister. Forms free from Petition Secretary, 431, Oxford Street, London, W. 1.

NATIONAL POOR LAW OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION ASKS THE COLLEGE OF NURSING, LTD., TO REDEEM ITS PROMISES.

The National Poor Law Officers' Association has made a fundamental mistake in promoting a petition from Nurses trained in Poor Law Institutions to the College of Nursing, Limited, asking that "direct and adequate representation may be given to the Poor Law Nursing Service upon the first Council of the Royal British College of Nursing." First of all there is no Royal British College of Nursing, and should the Privy Council sanction the incorporation of the College of Nursing, Limited, under that title, and it promotes a Bill excluding from direct representation Poor Law Nurses on the Provisional Governing Body, it is to Parliament that excluded nurses should appeal, right to the fountain head they should go, as the Society for State Registration of Nurses has done. Their demand should be for a just Bill providing for an independent Governing Body such as controls the Medical, Midwifery, and Teachers' professions. A Governing Body as provided by the College of Nursing, of nominees of general hospital committees, represents the nurses' employers only, and is as obsolete as the dodo. Let Poor Law Nurses sign the Petition to the Prime Minister promoted by the Society for the State Registration of Trained Nurses, asking for self government, bitterly opposed by the College. It is for Parliament to protect the worker in any Bill for their organisation, especially when promoted by their employers. This nursing controversy is a labour question and must be legislated for as such.

The College having broken its promise to the National Poor Law Officers' Association, according to Clause 9 of its petition, as it did in its negotiations with the Central Committee, that Association would be well advised to decline to negotiate further with persons whose word is not as good as their bond. We are not all so guileless as the Hon. Officers of the R.B.N.A.; but then we have not all got a Nurses' Royal Charter to pledge.

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