

## ANOTHER "GAMBOL" IN SUPPORT OF THE COLLEGE OF NURSING, LTD.

The hot indignation of the independent members of the Nursing Profession, and the very widespread disgust at the exploitation of its prestige by the *Daily Sketch* Victory Ball, would need little further comment on the part of this JOURNAL, were it not for incidents connected with it that require our criticism. Suffice it to say that at this most untimely "gambol," thousands of the most frivolous section of the community danced and romped at the Albert Hall, on the 27th November, from 10 p.m. until 5 o'clock on the following morning, that drink flowed freely until such time as it was considered advisable to notify that it had "run out," and that when the doors at last closed, the riotous mænads continued their dizzy gyrations in the public thoroughfares! Best draw a veil—as we note many of the daily papers considered it wise to do.

"Eye-Witness" reports, "The best people were not there—but the wrong 'uns were," and the lack of patronage from the Royal Family was as significant as it was decisive—so far as the "right thing" was concerned. We are informed that the statement made by the *Evening Standard* (Hulton press) on November 15th, that "the Victory Ball has the complete approval of the King and Queen," was quite unauthorised, and we consider that this statement was calculated to place Their Majesties in a totally false position in the opinion of thoughtful members of the community.

In this connection we must intimate to the Hon. Sir Arthur Stanley, the Chairman of the Ball; to the Viscountess Cowdray, and other persons who inflicted it upon us, that what is not good enough for Royalty is not good enough for the self-respecting members of the Nursing Profession. We must now direct our readers' attention to the following correspondence:—

### A PROTEST AND THE REPLY.

A Protest against the holding of the Victory Ball at the Royal Albert Hall was issued by Isabel Macdonald, Secretary of the Royal British Nurses' Association; Mildred Heather-Bigg, R.R.C., President of the Matrons' Council of Great Britain and Ireland; Ethel G. Fenwick, President of the Society for the State Registration of Trained Nurses; and M. L. Rimmer, Hon. Secretary of the National Union of Trained Nurses. In their protest the signatories say:—

We, representing many thousands of professional men and women, beg to offer a whole-hearted protest against the so-called Victory Ball to be held at the Albert Hall on November 27th; especially we protest because it is declared to be given on behalf of the Nation's Fund for Nurses. The organised Societies of Nurses have never been consulted; they thoroughly disapprove, and have repeatedly protested. We know, better than most people, by what awful suffering the measure of victory we are enjoying—and it is not complete—has been won. This ball, held at such a time, seems to us like dancing over the graves of the dead, and we object to its being associated with the Profession of Nursing.

Sir Arthur Stanley communicated to the press the following reply to the Protest:—

SIR,—My attention has been drawn to the letter issued by officials of four associations, claiming to speak on behalf of the nurses of Great Britain and Ireland, protesting against the holding of the "Victory Ball." To those who know that the high-sounding titles of the societies which these ladies claim to represent, cover a very small and insignificant minority of the nursing profession, the protest carries no weight. The College of Nursing, in aid of which the ball is being held, numbers at least three, and probably four, times as many nurse members as all these four associations put together. It should also be remembered that a large part of the proceeds of the ball will go to the Tribute Fund, which is being established to help all nurses—not only those belonging to the College of Nursing, as has been falsely stated, who are sick or suffering or have fallen on evil days.

Those of us who are responsible for the College of Nursing—the only body that can fairly claim to speak in the name of the nurses—are accustomed to those protests, which occur with almost wearisome regularity from the same quarters whenever any effort is made by the College to raise funds which will be for the benefit of nurses, who have done so much for others, and who take so little thought for their own welfare. The Council of the College of Nursing approves the holding of the ball; that the public approves the objects for which it is held is shown by the fact that all the boxes and tickets have already been sold.

Yours faithfully,

ARTHUR STANLEY,

Chairman of the Council of the College of Nursing, Ltd.

The professional women who signed the Protest did not, as Sir Arthur Stanley states, "claim to speak on behalf of the Nurses of Great Britain and Ireland." In their official capacities they presented the views of the members of the Organized Nurses' Associations—which comprise the intelligent and independent wing of the nurses—and they protested against this War Charity, the Nation's Fund for Nurses, being associated with the Profession of Nursing of which they are members, at this time, when thousands of our people are still mourning their dead. The cheap sneers of the autocratic Chairman of the College of Nursing, Ltd., who informs the public that those who are responsible for his Company are "the only body that can fairly claim to speak in the name of nurses," is as ridiculous as it is misleading, but when he adds that "the Council of the College of Nursing approves the holding of the ball," then it is time for the members of the profession at large to estimate the danger of the College policy at its true economic value. For it means that the Matrons of the Nurse Training Schools originally nominated by Sir Arthur Stanley to form his Council, and who are largely responsible for the tone and discipline of the nurses of the future, are content that our profession should be based on charity obtained by reprehensible methods, controlled by laymen, and the whole fabric of its prestige reduced to dust and ashes. Alas! how are the mighty fallen! Surely such a betrayal of our hitherto high ethical standards is enough to make Florence Nightingale turn in her grave!

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