

A CRISIS IN THE GENERAL NURSING COUNCIL.

A "STRIKING" LESSON.

We owe an explanation to our readers why the resignation of Mr. J. C. Priestley, K.C., the Chairman of the General Nursing Council for England and Wales, was not reported in our last issue.

The resignation was known to the Editor of this Journal in her capacity as a member of the General Nursing Council, but as it was not notified "officially" to this professional journal, when "officially" sent to other journals, we did not feel justified in publishing it. We have inquired from the Registrar of the General Nursing Council if the "official" notification of the resignation was issued through the Office of the Council, and have been informed that it was not. We presume, therefore, that the notice of the resignation of the Chairman and the information that other members of the Council have also resigned were sent from another source. In any case, as the information has been given to the lay press, we are now at liberty to refer briefly to the matter.

The members of the Council who consider that their first duty in accepting office is to the nursing profession as a whole, have received no notification of the resignation of their colleagues, because, not unnaturally, those who organised what in effect amounts to a strike, did not attempt to induce the constitutional minority of members of the Council to follow their example. The agreement to resign (we believe provisionally) has had the effect of paralysing the work of the Council, which, when accepting nomination, the members of the Council undertook to perform; and is resulting in injury to the nurses and the public, for whose benefit the General Nursing Council was set up. The very urgent national work with which the Standing Committees are concerned cannot be proceeded with owing to no quorum of members attending the meetings, as announced in an inspired article in an unprofessional journal last week.

A "striking" lesson, indeed, to the trades-union branch of the profession!

In the meanwhile, the constitutional members are performing their duty to the best of their ability—as scrutineers of some of the hundreds of applications for registration awaiting consideration in the office—and in justice to applicants to whom Registration is

of the utmost importance, these will be presented direct to the Council should a quorum be present on Friday, December 16th, for which date the Council has been summoned.

THE RECORD OF CERTIFICATES IN THE REGISTER.

The Resolution brought before the General Nursing Council by Miss Cox-Davies at its meeting on October 28th last, proposing to deprive thousands of highly qualified nurses of the record of their certificates of proficiency in the State Register; and the support given to this serious deprivation by certain other members of the Council, necessitated firm and unflinching opposition from those who demanded that the utmost publicity should be given to the recommendation, in order to enable the nursing profession to take action in self-protection.

This action, necessarily prompt and uncompromising, has elicited the strongest expression of professional feeling; and the demand made by the minority of the Council for elementary justice to certificated nurses has been fully justified. The self-governing organisations of trained nurses and leading Leagues of Nurses have met and protested, by no uncertain resolutions, against the suggested professional damage, and appealed to the Minister of Health, over the heads of the General Nursing Council, to prevent it—which we have every hope he will do.

Sir Alfred Mond is a supremely able man of business, and he will instantly grasp, we have no doubt, the serious economic injury to the workers if their Certificates are withheld, as evidence of proficiency, from the State Register. It is up to the workers to impress him with the unanimity of their convictions on the question.

We hope the Minister of Health will speedily make it possible for the Statutory Council to perform the duties entrusted to it by Parliament as the Nurses' Registration Act provides; and that he will also reassure the nursing profession that its interests are safe in his keeping by agreeing to an amendment to the First Schedule which will secure justice to the highly qualified certificated nurses, without whose support the State Register will not be worth the paper on which it is printed.

A WORD FOR THE WEEK.

From committees, charity, and schism; from philanthropy and all the deceits of the Devil; Good Lord, deliver us.—*Florence Nightingale.*

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