

## THE REGISTERED NURSES' PARLIAMENTARY COUNCIL.

We are requested to announce that the Meeting to protest against the conduct of the members of the General Nursing Council for England and Wales—who combined, by direct action, to put this public Statutory body out of commission for ten weeks, thus treating their duties to the Nursing Profession and the public with contempt—and to petition the Minister of Health to dissolve the Council and permit the Registered Nurses to elect their own representatives, will be held on Friday, March 10th, at 11, Chandos Street, Cavendish Square, W., at 7 p.m. Councillor Beatrice Kent, the President of the Council, will preside, and nurses and others representing the interests of the Nursing Profession and the public, will speak to a series of resolutions to be forwarded to the Minister of Health and the Members of Parliament.

We are asked by Councillor Beatrice Kent to insert the following letter which she has addressed to the Minister of Health:—

To the Right Hon. Sir Alfred Mond, Bart., M.P., P.C.,  
Minister of Health.

SIR,—I am enclosing for your information copies of four Resolutions passed at a meeting of the Registered Nurses Parliamentary Council held in London on February 20th.

The Council takes strong exception to the action of those members of the General Nursing Council for England and Wales (1) who attempted to deprive Registered Nurses of the record of their certificates of proficiency on the State Register, (2) who held up the work of the Council for ten weeks by absenting themselves from meetings, and (3) who resumed their neglected duties at the end of that period for no reason assigned. My Council is of opinion that persons who behave in so irresponsible a manner are not persons who should be entrusted with the very important responsibilities placed by Parliament upon the General Nursing Council.

The Registered Nurses Parliamentary Council has called a public meeting, which will be held at 11, Chandos Street, Cavendish Square, on Friday, March 10th, at 7 p.m., which will consider the present situation as it affects the nursing profession, and at which, as President of that Council, I shall have the honour to preside. I shall be greatly obliged if you will inform me of the terms upon which the members of the General Nursing Council for England and Wales, who resorted to the extreme method of direct action to enforce their demands, consented to return to work, as I am anxious to be in the position to give this information to the meeting on March 10th.

May I also petition you on behalf of this Council not to sign the new Rules passed by the General Nursing Council for England and Wales at its meeting on February 17th until you have heard both sides. In this connection, may I respectfully invite you to be present at our meeting at 11, Chandos Street, on March 10th, so that you may hear the nurses' point of view.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

BEATRICE KENT, *President.*

431, Oxford St., W.

## PRESS OPINIONS ON THE G.N.C.

(From the *National Asylum Workers' Union Magazine.*)

### NURSES' REGISTRATION ACT (ENGLAND AND WALES).

#### Recalcitrant Members Resume Duty.

In our last issue we described the deadlock which had occurred in the working of the General Nursing Council, in consequence of the resignation of Mr. J. C. Priestley, K.C., the chairman of the Council, and the fact—to quote the words used by the Minister of Health in the House of Commons—that “two-thirds of the members have resigned with him, or have intimated their intention of doing so, unless he can be persuaded to withdraw his resignation.” Nothing could be more definite than that. Therefore, as no quorum attended the various committee meetings, all the important national business which Parliament had entrusted to the Council was delayed by the strike of the resigning members—an object-lesson, indeed, for the working classes!

The final result has been farcical. The late chairman has gone, but the resigning members have apparently swallowed their brave expressions of loyalty to him and returned to the fold. It irresistibly reminds one of the immortal ballad of Bo-Peep, whose sheep had only to be left alone for all to come home, wagging their tails behind them! The ultimate fate of Bo-Peep, if we remember right, was mercifully wrapped in mystery.

So the Council met again on February 3rd, with a new chairman—a distinguished physician, and a much more adequate chairman, presumably, for a professional council. Apparently the retiring members gave neither explanation nor apology for the manner in which they had neglected the public duties entrusted to them. It is a matter of common knowledge that they resigned at the moment when widespread indignation had been aroused in the nursing profession by the proposal to deprive nurses who became registered of their obvious right to have enrolled against their names the hospital certificates they had gained, after years of arduous work. The Minister of Health has gone out of his way to state publicly that they did not resign because of this matter. We submit that it would have been more to the point if he had stated *why* they had resigned.

In any case, the facts are clear that two-thirds of the Council, who are doctors or persons more or less directly employers of nurses, have deliberately, for ten weeks, not only refused to do their own work, but have thereby prevented the other members from performing the duties with which they had been entrusted by the State, and which by their acceptance of office they had undertaken to do. In all seriousness, we ask how can the public, or the nursing profession, feel any confidence in a Council with such views of public service and duty?

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