

and Mr. Richardson, Captain Elliot, and Mr. Spencer (who supported) the humble Address to His Majesty the King in the House of Commons on March 22nd, 1922. They have proved that the days of chivalry have not yet passed."

TO THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY OF THE LABOUR PARTY, WHO WAS NEVER TOO BUSY TO HELP:—

"That this Union of Trained Nurses wishes to express its very great appreciation of the help afforded to Nurses by Mr. Lindsay, on every occasion when they sought it, in spite of the fact that his duties are so onerous and his time so taken up with other matters."

To the thirty-four Labour Party, six Coalition Unionists, four Coalition Liberals, two Liberal, C.L.N., Independent, and Nationalist Members:—

"The heartiest thanks of this Union to the Members who remained, in spite of the lateness of the hour, in the House of Commons on March 22nd, 1922, to support the Nurses in their humble Address to His Majesty the King."

The Secretary was instructed to forward the resolutions to each of those concerned. Others, which must be held over till next week, were also moved.

MAUDE MACCALLUM,
Hon. Secretary.

NURSING IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

NEW RULE 9 (A): THE LEGAL ARGUMENT.

In the few hurried "pars" when going to press last week, we observed that we were of opinion that, in his reply to Major Barnett on the illegal methods of the General Nursing Council for England and Wales, Sir Alfred Mond (Minister of Health) had been very badly briefed, because Ministers rely upon others for the accuracy of statements they make to the House, and because it is not presumable that a Minister of the Crown would, upon his own initiative, make the erroneous statements, and personal attacks evidently inspired by keen personal animus, presented to the House of Commons on March 22nd.

We will take Sir Alfred Mond's statements *sevitim*.

1. Major Barnett advanced that the new Rule 9 (a) was *ultra vires* because the English Council had failed to consult the Scottish and Irish Councils as provided in Section 6 (3) of the Registration Act, and alluded to the letter from the Scottish Council, in which it had given notice that, pending the withdrawal of the delegation of the statutory duties of the English Council to organised bodies of nurses, the Scottish Council had not thought fit to adopt any reciprocal rule for registration.

Sir Alfred Mond, who owned he knew nothing of the attitude of the Scottish Council on the question—(why had not his advisers brought it to his notice?)—described this legal point as a "mare's nest," and produced an opinion from his legal adviser that the new rule did not deal with

qualifications, and was merely "machinery"; and he pooh-pooed the argument that "shall" means "shall" as stated in the Act. According to the Minister, the Scottish Council was "in fault" for the action of the English Council, of which it was never apprised. An argument to which Captain Elliot replied, "I do claim that, in passing a new rule, the onus of proof lies on the man who wishes to change the law." "So much for the legal argument," to quote Sir Alfred Mond, before he passed on to make erroneous statements concerning the constitutional minority of the General Nursing Council, and his attack on entirely false premises on the methods of the Chairman (Mrs. Bedford Fenwick) of the Registration Committee.

THE THIRTY YEARS' STRUGGLE FOR LEGAL STATUS, EDUCATIONAL AND ECONOMIC RIGHTS.

To hark back to the immemorial battles between the State Registrationists (the free nurses and their supporters) and the "antis" (hospital governors and their medical staffs and matrons). This great civic and economic struggle of the workers for legal status and State organised education against vested interests, which permitted chaotic conditions of educational standards, sweated hours of work—often detrimental to health—and miserably inadequate pay, was described by Sir Alfred Mond as "a very old standing squabble which really ought not to trouble this House." (We noted the grin on the Labour benches at this argument of a Minister of the Crown that the enfranchised nurse citizen has apparently no civic rights.)

Sir Alfred further described this now historic struggle between capital and labour as a "feud," and made the untrue statement that "so long did the feud go on, that no Rules came into existence at all . . . and the old feud has been pursued by a small minority which is now trying to destroy the Rules."

GOODWILL AND PUBLIC SPIRIT OF THE MINORITY.

The facts are that by every means in their power the "minority" entered whole-heartedly and in the most conciliatory spirit upon the work of the Council when appointed in May, 1920; and from documentary evidence which we have carefully filed it can be proved that the draft Constitution, and the whole code of Rules owed vastly more to the expert knowledge of the "minority" than to all the other members of the Council put together; the large majority of whom were totally ignorant of how the organisation of the profession of nursing by the State was to be accomplished. Indeed, many of these persons had either never studied the question of State Registration of Nurses, or had for so long vigorously opposed it that the aspirations of the minority found little response in their reactionary minds. It speaks well for the pacific policy of the "minority," that owing to incessant work, especially in the Registration Committee, Rules containing 52 Clauses, together with four Schedules and various

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