

THE CONTROL OF THE NURSING PROFESSION.

At a recent Executive Council Meeting of the Association of Poor Law Unions of England and Wales, as reported in the *Poor Law Officer's Journal*, held at the Connaught Rooms London, W.C., the Rev. P. S. G. Propert (Fulham), the President, in the Chair, the General Purposes Committee reported on the following resolutions passed at the Conference of Representatives of Poor-Law Nurse-Training Schools, on November 23rd, 1921, viz. :—

(1) That the General Nursing Council be urged to give an opportunity to the Association of Poor-Law Unions to examine and submit their views on the draft syllabus of examination, which is understood to be in the course of preparation, prior to such syllabus being transmitted to the Minister of Health by the Council.

(2) That in the unfortunate event of the General Nursing Council declining to modify their proposals in such a way as to meet, in a substantial manner, the objections now formulated, this matter be referred to the Association of Poor-Law Unions with a view to an appeal to the Minister of Health on such points as may appear to them to be desirable, and that failing reasonable satisfaction they may take such steps as may appear necessary and expedient.

The Committee decided to recommend the Council to agree with the above resolutions.

The Committee also stated they were informed of a report that the Chairman and more than two-thirds of the General Nursing Council in England and Wales had tendered their resignations to the Minister of Health. The Committee pointed out that the Nurses' Registration Act requires that the present Nursing Council shall exist for not less than two and not more than three years from the date of the passing of the Act, December 23rd, 1919. The next Council is to be composed of nine nominated members and sixteen registered nurses elected by the nurses on the register. Of the nine nominated members, two each are to be appointed by the Privy Council and the Board of Education, respectively, and five by the Minister of Health, after consultation with persons and bodies having experience of training schools, &c. There would thus be another opportunity for the Minister to consider the claims of the Association of Poor-Law Unions, if the resignations take effect. The Committee decided to recommend that the Council urge the appointment of a nominee of the Association upon the General Nursing Council upon such Council being reconstructed.

Canon Glossop moved the adoption of the recommendations in the report.

Sir Henry Manton thought that if it was right for the Privy Council to send two representatives to the General Nursing Council, the Council of that Association was clearly entitled to two representatives.

The Secretary suggested that the Council should

select two members for nomination on the Nursing Council if the opportunity arose.

Sir Harry Manton moved accordingly.

Mr. Hawes moved that Mrs. Batters be selected as the only name for the time being as a matter of policy.

This was agreed to and the recommendation of the Committee was adopted.

The demand of lay employers to direct representation on the General Nursing Council—the Educational and Disciplinary Authority of "Registered Nurses" and entirely financed by these workers—cannot, in our opinion, be justified. Poor Law Guardians have no more right to such power on the General Nursing Council than they have on the General Medical Council or the Central Midwives Board. And to judge from the present *impasse* in the Council the more the employer attempts to domineer over "Registered Nurses," the more impossible will the situation become. No men's profession would tolerate such a situation for a moment. Why then should enfranchised women citizens submit to it? Registered Nurses have equal right to professional responsibility with medical practitioners and barristers, and they have a right to exercise their own judgment, especially as they are called upon to finance the General Nursing Council, not only for their own benefit, but for that of the public.

THE COLLEGE OF NURSING, LTD., AND THE STATE REGISTER.

We learn on good authority that the officials of the College of Nursing, Ltd., have never given up hope of saving its face with those nurses to whom it gave a pledge, that if they paid a guinea to register with the College they would "automatically and without further fee, be placed upon the State Register when the Nurses' Registration Bill is passed," and that efforts are being made to thrust by some means—other than provided in the Rules approved by Parliament—College members on to the State Register at a reduced fee, and without the protection to their colleagues of the prescribed scrutiny to which all Applications are now subjected through the persons appointed by Parliament to compile the State Register. Any such proposal is fundamentally unjust, and coercive to those professional nurses who decline to place themselves under the control of the very autocratic group of male executive officers who practically govern the College.

The result of any such pact would be that the College would "nobble" the vote for the coming election of nurses on to the Council, an election-eering device which must be met with uncompromising opposition from all lovers of freedom and fairplay in our ranks.

Parliament refused to grant the control of the Nursing Profession to the College Company (as provided in the College Bill) in the Government Act for the State Registration of Nurses, and it is the duty of the whole profession to maintain

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