

## SOCIAL INFLUENCE.

4.—MR. A. V. ALEXANDER (Co.-op., Hillsborough) asked the representative of the Ministry of Health why labour organisations representing working nurses have no representation amongst the nine nominees to the General Nursing Council for England and Wales; and whether he will take steps to repair this omission?

SIR W. JOYNSON-HICKS: Sixteen members of the General Nursing Council are nurses elected by the nurses on the Register. My right hon. Friend sees no necessity for the appointment of additional nurse members, nor is this contemplated by the provisions of the Schedule to the Nurses' Registration Act which prescribe the constitution of the Council.

*Remarks.*—We gather this question refers to Government Departments rather than to nurses. Quite unnecessarily the Privy Council nominates two members, the Board of Education two, and the Ministry of Health five—a very useless expense to the Nurses who finance the Council. Leisured women of title, and school mistresses, have proved totally ignorant of trained nursing, and mischievously interfering in economic and educational conditions of which they know nothing. Professional government by nominees is entirely obsolete. The General Nursing Council should be an entirely elective body. At present the nurses have to finance and be governed by persons over whom they have no control—a most undemocratic procedure.

## ILLEGAL ACTION BY CHAIRMAN AND REGISTRAR.

5.—MR. C. EDWARDS (Lab., Bedwelty) asked the representative of the Ministry of Health whether he is aware that, in spite of the Rule of the General Nursing Council that all minutes, registers, and records shall be open to the inspection of members of the Council during the Registrar's business hours, two representatives of the working nurses on the Council were, by the Chairman's orders, refused permission to inspect documents in connection with the compilation of the Register; and whether he will make inquiry into the complaint and take whatever steps are necessary to secure compliance with the rule?

6.—MR. T. GRIFFITHS (Pontypool) asked the representative of the Ministry of Health how many nurses have been placed upon the State Register for England and Wales under Rule 9A; why this information was persistently refused to members of the first Council, who had a right to it; and by what authority the Chairman of the Council refused to certain members, who were representing working nurses on the Council, access to the papers in the General Nursing Council offices dealing with this and other matters, in view of the fact that Rule 49 explicitly states that all minutes, registers, and records shall be open to the inspection of members of the Council during the Registrar's business hours?

SIR W. JOYNSON-HICKS: My right hon. Friend will cause inquiry to be made on these points and will communicate with the hon. members in due course.

*Remarks.*—The only error the members of the Council made in this connection was to leave the office until they had inspected the papers to which they had right of access under the Statutory Rules. Apparently both the Chairman and the Registrar acted illegally, the latter official never having realised the fact that she is the servant of the Council and not its mistress.

Further questions and replies are held over till next week.

## THE PROFESSIONAL UNION OF TRAINED NURSES.

I was interested to see in the issue of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING of February 24th that the Chairman of the General Nursing Council for England and Wales hoped the Council would feel it was not a Trade Union.

Although I attended every meeting of the late Council, I cannot remember one occasion on which he reminded it that it was not a *combination of those representing the employers' interests*, and this although it has seemed to me that the entire business of that Council was taken up with the endeavour to give the College of Nursing, Ltd., the full control of the Profession that it has now achieved, and that the large sums of money which the nurses had to provide were also used for this object.

From the second meeting over which Sir Wilmot Herringham presided we had definite proof that he had joined the side of the employers, and had no sympathy whatever with either the Trade Union or the working nurse. I can remember no occasion on which any member of the Council, outside their few direct representatives, appeared concerned as to what the Nurses desired in any matter of importance. The whole object of the nineteen majority members on that Council seemed to be to secure to the employers the power they already had.

Speaking personally, I found that the Chairman never hesitated to break the Rules in order to deprive the working nurses of freedom of speech or action. I mention two personal experiences, because I desire to speak only of what I know. In spite of Rule 41, which says:—

(i) "Every notice of motion . . . shall be given or sent to the Registrar."

(ii) "The Registrar shall insert in the Agenda Paper . . . all notices of motion which she may receive. . . ."

the Chairman refused to allow a motion that I had sent in, at the correct time, to be placed upon the Agenda, because I wished to ascertain the number of second-hand entrants that had been placed upon the Register. He must have known that it was *ultra vires*. Also, he must have been aware that he had no right to close a meeting when a member of the Council was on her feet speaking, because he did not wish certain information that she was giving to be made public, namely, that the College Register printed the names of certain nurses as holding *certificates*, when the General Nursing Council list showed them to be only *trained*.

I venture to say that Sir Wilmot Herringham would not have dared to behave in such a manner had he been Chairman of the General Medical Council, or, indeed, had he been the Chairman of any Council composed of men. It is so much easier to bully women—especially nurses—even though some of them will not take this without protest.

MAUDE MACCALLUM,  
(Hon. Secretary).

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