

THE GUILD OF NURSES.

A general meeting of nurses, organised by the Guild of Nurses, was held at Reggiorri's Restaurant, London, on November 16th, to consider the cause of a great deal of unrest arising from the conditions of duty which nurses generally have had to endure since the outbreak of War, especially in London, Middlesex and Surrey. The position was fully explored.

The basic reason for the transfer of Nursing Staff to Hospitals other than their own resulted from the Ministry of Health taking over control of the Hospitals, and the necessity of meeting the requirements of districts receiving evacuees, both children and patients. It was realised that a certain amount of confusion would arise, and nurses generally were fully prepared to meet the necessity by reasonable sacrifice.

It was evident that the transferring of nurses had been accompanied by a degree of callous indifference to their welfare.

The following Resolutions were therefore unanimously adopted at the meeting:—

1. That this meeting expresses profound resentment at the manner in which trained nurses, nurses in training and assistant nurses are being treated, particularly in the worsening of conditions of employment, the depressing of existing wage rates without the slightest regard of personal liabilities and responsibilities and the enforcement upon many of unemployment or the necessity of taking up new forms of employment in order to maintain their homes. The introduction into the profession of unskilled labour in the form of nursing auxiliaries whilst many members of the profession are unemployed is viewed with apprehension.

We demand in the interests of public safety and security that the Minister of Health

shall immediately receive a deputation of those so adversely affected to discuss the seriousness of the position arising, and that a Committee should be set up, including representatives of the nursing profession, to deal with the matters which are being brought up.

2. That this meeting instructs the Guild of Nurses to arrange for a protest meeting to be held in the immediate future, and appoints a representative committee to make the necessary arrangements in connection therewith. That a statement of case be prepared and transmitted to all Members of Parliament in the London Area (and others who may be interested) and that they be invited to attend the meeting.

3. That the Press be earnestly requested to give the fullest support to the position, and to the terrible plight of many experienced and trained nurses whose services are apparently not now required.

Arising from the Resolutions a Special Committee was appointed to take action as soon as possible to bring the just demands of Registered Nurses before the public through the Press, and to the notice of Members of Parliament.

It is to be hoped that the Minister of Health will "see his way" to remedy the present chaotic condition of nursing service which the exclusion of professional participation in the organisation of nursing in war, has so speedily revealed.

As we go to press, we learn that though the Minister of Health states he has the matter under consideration, he has not yet fixed a date to receive a deputation of Registered Nurses.

The Guild of Nurses is holding a meeting on December 13th at 8.30 p.m., in the Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London, W.C. The Lord Horder, G.C.V.O., M.D., has

consented to take the chair, and three nurses will present their own case and emphasise the injustice of the competition of auxiliary and other untrained nurses, as promoted by the Government through the Civil Nursing Reserve. Mr. F. Messer, Member for Tottenham South, will also speak.

NEPOTISM IN HIGH PLACES.

The patriotic members of the community have been violently shocked by evidence of nepotism in Government offices, and we have to thank the Civil Service Association and Mr. V. McEntee, M.P., for the public spirit in demanding information from the Minister of Pensions in the House of Commons concerning the appointment of the daughter of the Deputy Secretary of the Ministry as Secretary to her father.

Mr. McEntee asked if the Minister could state: "The age and

length of service of the daughter of the Deputy Secretary of the Ministry, who has been appointed to an executive post;

"What special qualifications she possessed; whether any increase of pay has been given to her since her appointment, if so, how long after the date of her initial appointment;

"Whether her duties require her to act as personal secretary to her father, and whether it was necessary to transfer an established Civil Servant from this post to accommodate this lady."

The reply of the Minister was, in our opinion, far from satisfactory, but did elicit the statement that:

"More than 400 temporary staff members had been engaged, and the numbers related to officers were very



MEMBERS OF THE GUILD OF NURSES IN CONFERENCE ASSEMBLED DEMAND JUSTICE FROM MINISTER OF HEALTH.

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