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LYN, TUESDAY, AUGUST 26, 1919

95 NURSES ON FOOD STRIKE IN CITY HOSPITAL

Won't Kings County Women Call Food Disgraceful.

FIGHT START HUNGER STRIKE

on Is Won't Enter Dining Room Un- til Conditions Improve.

Ninety-five nurses of the Kings County Hospital have gone on a hunger strike and declared today that if their demands for better food were not met by the officials of the hospital they will refuse to work and care for the hundreds of patients there. Although the strike commenced yesterday noon, it did not assume any great proportions until today.

Not a single one of the nurses has stepped into the dining room in the nurses' home on Clarkson street and New York avenue, excepting the graduate nurses whom, it is pointed out,

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general demand of the student nurses for food that "can be eaten."
An ultimatum was sent to Miss Isabel Burroughs, head of the Kings County Hospital School for Nurses, demanding that food be improved at once, but according to the striking nurses she had refused to give their plea any consideration.
Neither Dr. Mortimer C. Jones, superintendent of the hospital building, nor his assistant were in the hospital building this morning, but members of the official staff declared that they knew nothing about the strike and if they did, could make no statement. As is usual in such cases, the matter was put up to Commissioner of Charities Bird S. Coler for an official explanation.
Several months ago the hospital internes also went on a strike, refused to eat the food offered them and in a body marched to a restaurant on Flatbush avenue, ate a fine meal and then presented the bill to the superintendent. Since that time, it is understood, their fare has improved considerably.
The nurses who have gone on the hunger strike consist of the young women in the junior and senior classes of the training school. The course in the school takes two years and two months and those serving over one year being classed as seniors. All agreed this morning that unless some recognition was shown to their plea for better food that by tomorrow they would refuse to work. They pointed out that by doing so they would cripple the entire hospital service as there is but one graduate nurse in charge of each ward with four or five pupils working under her. From a humanitarian standpoint they declare they did not want to take such drastic action, but the action of the officials in refusing to consider their demands might make it necessary.
"For a long time we have been kicking about the food served to us. All of the meat served to us tastes as though it was tainted. There are flies in our food and the eggs served for breakfast are in such a state that no one ever thinks of eating them. For a long time we put up with this and bought extra food to keep us alive out of our immense salaries with \$10 a month for juniors and \$13 for seniors. Recently, however, even this luxury was denied us and we were ordered not to bring any more food into the building and if we cared to buy food and eat it we would have to go into the cellar of the nurses' home," declared one of the indignant nurses this morning.

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Katherine joined the other student nurses at Kings County Hospital when they went on "STRIKE" because of the food. While enrolled in the School for Nurses, they live near the Hospital on Clarkson Street. This story appeared in the Tuesday August 26, 1919.

The nurses, a number of whom have completed their regulation course, have an added grievance because the annual graduation supposed to be held in June has not yet taken place. They have been told that the graduation was postponed, owing to Miss Burroughs' illness, which necessitated in her leaving the hospital and spending a considerable time in the country.
"We have lots of other complaints to make also," declared another of the nurses. "When Miss Burroughs went to Chicago a ban was put on the nurses' home. Another thing that riles us is the fact that if a pupil nurse falls in love and marries a doctor she is immediately dismissed from the service, but if a graduate nurse marries an orderly everything is all right."
The nurses are not allowed to leave the hospital grounds wearing their uniforms, and many, therefore, on duty for ten hours are feeling the pangs of hunger, but resolutely declared today that they were willing to suffer if they could make the hospital authorities see the necessity of treating them humanely.
Commissioner Coler when asked about the hunger strike said that he had not been notified of any hunger strike at the hospital.

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