

'NEVER DOUBTED HER LOYALTY,' SAY 22 TEACHERS TO BOARD

"We Have Never Heard Her Say Anything That Contained a Shadow of Disloyalty," Say Colleagues of Miss Freda Held—
Teacher Who Made the Charges Apologizes and Retracts.

DID MR. COWLEY SUGGEST RESIGNATION?

A meeting of the women teachers of the Carlton Public school was held yesterday, at which it was unanimously decided to send the following statement to the Toronto School Board relative to the resignation of Miss Freda Held. There were twenty-two teachers present and each of them signed the statement. There are only 23 women teachers and three men teachers on the staff:

"Carlton School,
"Jan. 23, 1918.

"To the Board of Education:

"We, the undersigned teachers of Carlton school, wish to testify to the Board of Education that never at any time, in our associations with Miss Held, have we had reason to doubt her loyalty as a British citizen.

"We have never heard her say anything that contained a shadow of disloyalty, and, in addition, she has always been a most faithful worker in all patriotic movements connected with the school." (signed)

| | |
|--------------|------------------|
| M. Canavan | S. O. Moyer |
| M. Vardon | A. Chantler |
| M. Jackson | F. Birdsall |
| M. Henderson | M. Davidge |
| A. M. Bull | K. A. Hannington |
| Mabel Dalby | E. M. Pomeroy |
| M. E. Lee | M. R. McKenzie |
| A. Geeson | A. L. Matthews |
| E. L. Moore | C. Hamshaw |
| M. McMullin | M. B. Brown |
| C. A. Talbot | M. Burkholder |

The document has been received by the secretary of the Board of Education.

Teacher Apologizes and Retracts.

Seen by The Star yesterday Miss Held said that the teacher who had been responsible for the charges had been to her and in the presence of two other teachers had withdrawn all the charges she had made and had apologized for the trouble she had caused. "She admitted that there was not the slightest ground for them," said Miss Held. "That she did not want to have it on her conscience that she had done me an injury by her 'chance talk' and that she would do everything she could to undo the mischief done." The Star learned that this teacher was now sick at home. "She told me," said Miss Held, "that if she had known that I was not pro-German at all she would not have said what she did; but it never occurred to me to go about telling people that I was not pro-German." Miss Held said that she had learned on Saturday for the first time that Inspector Armstrong had telephoned from one of the schools that he had heard Miss Held give a pro-German lesson and that he had been overheard and that that was the cause of the rumor. Asked concerning the lesson, she said she supposed it was the one on Tom Moore's poem and that the inspector had said at the time, last March, that it was a good lesson and that, anyhow, she had used the notes provided by the Department of Education.

Miss Held explained that she re-

signed because she was persuaded that her parentage would inevitably lead to her dismissal and she had no wish to bring her relatives into the matter. A lady who lived with the Helds some time before the war testified that the conversation of the children had always been decidedly pro-British. Miss Held said she had not the smallest desire for publicity and the whole thing was intensely distressing to her; but an increasing number of persons seemed to agree that she had been unjustly treated and that she was prepared to fight for her professional existence. She asserted in the most emphatic way that she was British and entirely loyal to British ideals.

Did Cowley Suggest Resignation?

When asked whether he had suggested to Miss Held that she resign Chief Inspector Cowley declined to make any statement other than that he could report to the Board of Education only.

Miss Held was also seen by The Star with regard to statement of the chairman of the Board that she was not likely to press for a reopening of the case for some unexpressed reason. She said she was fighting for her professional life and that she had nothing to fear and had not the smallest objection to any investigation that the committee might wish to conduct. She had asked why the investigation had not been concluded and had been told by the chairman that it was not convenient. She had offered to communicate to the chairman certain matters regarding her relatives on the question of nationality that were being dragged into the controversy and had been told by the chairman that they had nothing to do with the matter. Dr. Steele had snuffed out the attempts at the investigation to introduce these family matters. She could think of nothing else and had no fear at all, though she admitted the worry of it all was greatly distressing her.

Ex-Pupils to Ask Reconsideration.

Mrs. H. E. Graham, 2469 Queen street east, who was a colleague of Miss Held's at the Hamilton Normal school, spoke in the highest terms of Miss Held's ability and integrity. "I was in the same classroom with Miss Held," she said, "for three months and I was with her a great deal out of school, and all her classmates considered her one of the finest girls in the school at the time. Nothing I ever saw in her would lead me to think she had pro-German leanings. There are enough real enemies to fight across the seas without creating them at home. We talk a good deal about British fair play, but I cannot see there has been much fair play in Miss Held's case. It is more like Kaiserism than British fair play."

Mrs. Graham said she was busy communicating with other old students of the Normal school who were contemporaries of Miss Held, with a view to a petition to the School Board for reconsideration of Miss Held's resignation.