

The Chairman, in closing the meeting, said, "Do not let us blame the nurses too much." She pointed out that the training of nurses was often defined and controlled by committees who did not know what nursing education meant.

Every Committee of a training school should include expert nurses to advise as to nursing education.

All nurses knew how much the *morale* depended on self-respect and high ethical standards. She did not know of any nursing school in the country where a real effort was made to instruct the probationers in nursing ethics. American nurses in the first few months of their training were taught ethics in relation to the medical profession, the patients, and their fellow nurses. Registration was the only remedy.

THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TRAINED NURSES OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

The National Council of Trained Nurses held a Conference, following on the Annual Meeting of the Society for the State Registration of Trained Nurses, at which several important questions were discussed.

THE NEED FOR A TRAINED NURSES' ECONOMIC LEAGUE.

In the morning Mrs. Bedford Fenwick presided, and introduced Miss Henrietta Hawkins, P.L.G., who presented a paper on "The Need for a Trained Nurses' Economic League," in which she claimed, "It is a fundamental principle that for the stability of any body of workers, and for the establishment of just economic conditions, co-operation between its members is required. Further, if it is to be self-respecting, and respected by others, it is necessary that it should be organized, that it should demand a high standard of skill as the qualification for admission to its ranks, and should then take steps to protect that standard.

"This is the lesson we learn from the old Trade Guilds, which, founded in the Middle Ages, are still a force in the City of London—the reason being that they demanded a long apprenticeship, with resulting high skill and pride of craft on the part of their members, and their financial stability is so secure that they are powerful Corporations, held in the greatest honour and respect in the financial world."

Points brought out in the paper were that it is unquestionable that nursing education has

suffered in efficiency because its economic basis is so insecure, and the chief reason why nurses, as a class, concern themselves so little with economics is because they understand so little of their meaning, power, and importance.

Economics, the speaker said, were briefly, "the science which treats of the nature of wealth and the laws which govern its production, exchange, and distribution." It might appear, perhaps, a dry subject, but to those who studied it it became increasingly fascinating. Moreover, as sound finance was the basis of the prosperity of a nation, it was equally so in the case of a profession. It was essential to the welfare of the latter that it should control and administer its own finances. Further, every individual member should realize that it was an obligation of membership of a profession that each should contribute something to its upkeep. Industrial workers, who had learnt this lesson in the school of adversity, were now a force to be reckoned with through their trade organizations, built up by their own work and money.

It was because both knowledge and interest would be stimulated by a Trained Nurses' Economic League, and that it would benefit the Nursing Profession as a whole and its individual members, that she suggested the duty of founding such a League.

Nurses would be able through its medium to discuss the best methods of defining, maintaining, and raising the standard of nursing education.

The speaker emphasised the value to nurses of an Insurance Society managed by a committee of trained nurses, and said the experience of such a society proved that even with a small membership all legitimate sickness claims could be fully met, and a substantial sum saved in a few years.

Another most important essential in the well-being of any profession was a voice in the public press, controlled by the members themselves, which, if loyally supported, should prove a financial asset in support of the professional organization to which it belonged, and not of outsiders.

After hearing the reasons advanced by the speaker in support of the proposition, "That a Trained Nurses' Economic League be now formed," a proposal seconded by Miss Carter, it was unanimously agreed as desirable, and the Chairman announced that Miss Hawkins had kindly consented to undertake the preliminary organization.

We hope to report the paper and discussion fully next week.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)