

## THE BRITISH COLLEGE OF NURSES.

### REPORT OF THE COUNCIL MEETING.

A Meeting of the Council of the British College of Nurses was held at 39, Portland Place, London, W.1, on Saturday, January 22nd, 1938, at 2.30 p.m.

The President, Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, was in the Chair, and there were present: Miss M. Breay and Miss M. S. Cochrane, R.R.C., Vice-Presidents; Miss I. Macdonald, Miss A. M. Bushby, Miss E. Brodie, Miss G. Le. Geyt, Miss D. G. Tilby and Miss S. Vian, Fellows; and Miss D. Dickinson, Member.

Prayers having been read the Minutes of the last Meeting were confirmed.

### BUSINESS ARISING.

#### Representation of the Nursing Profession on the Inter-Departmental Committee on Nursing Services.

In accordance with the decision of the Meeting of the Council of the British College of Nurses held on December 18th, 1937, the following letters were sent:—

To The Rt. Hon. Sir Kingsley Wood, M.P., P.C.,  
Minister of Health.

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge your letter of December 17th, which was placed before the Council of the British College of Nurses at its last Meeting.

The Council desires that an expression of regret should be forwarded to the Minister of Health on his further letter reiterating the policy of exclusion of important nurses' organisations from representation on the Inter-Departmental Committee on Nursing Services.

This decision, in the opinion of the Council, is calculated to arouse a deep sense of resentment against the policy of excluding organised professional workers from an effective voice on this Committee whilst a very large number of persons necessarily ignorant of their needs have been appointed in an overwhelming majority to adjudicate upon the economic and professional status of a large body of highly skilled women.

The opinion of my Council is that the Constitution of this Committee is calculated to still further deter suitable women from entering a profession in which the conditions of service are decided without their intelligent co-operation.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,  
ALICE STEWART BRYSON,  
Secretary.

To which the Minister replied:—

DEAR MADAM,

I am desired by Sir Kingsley Wood to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 5th January on the question of representation on the Inter-Departmental Committee on Nursing Services.

Yours faithfully,  
S. F. HEARDER,  
Private Secretary.

#### Thanks to Members of Parliament.

A letter from the Council expressing thanks to Members of Parliament who advocated that more members of the great Profession itself should be represented on the Committee was sent to: Capt. Cunningham-Reid, D.F.C. (Member for St. Marylebone), Commander Sir Archibald Southby, Bt. (Member for Epsom), and Mr. McEntee (Member for Walthamstow W.):—

THE BRITISH COLLEGE OF NURSES,  
39, Portland Place, W.1.

DEAR SIR,

11th January, 1938.

At a recent Meeting of the Council of the British College of Nurses held at 39, Portland Place, London, W.1, the Report of the Debate which took place in the House of Commons on December 3rd, 1937, on the Second Reading

of the "Local Authorities (Hours of Employment in connection with Hospitals and Institutions) Bill" was considered.

The Council of this College views with grave concern that representatives of important nurses' organisations have been refused representation upon the Inter-Departmental Committee on Nursing Services.

In the Debate my Council noted with great satisfaction that you advocated representation of the organised nurses on the Committee appointed to consider their economic and professional position, and desired that a warm vote of thanks be conveyed expressing its gratitude and appreciation to you for advocating that more representatives of the Nursing Profession itself should be added to the Inter-Departmental Committee on Nursing Services.

I am,

Yours sincerely,  
ALICE STEWART BRYSON,  
Secretary.

To which replies conveying thanks have been received.

#### Jurisdiction over Maternity Nurses.

The following further letter was received from the Minister of Health:—

MADAM,

I am directed by the Minister of Health to refer to your letter of the 9th inst., and, in reply to your enquiry, to state that the Central Midwives Board is the authority which governs and regulates midwives in accordance with the rules framed by the Board, whether they are acting as midwives or as maternity nurses.

I am,

Your obedient servant,  
Z. L. PUXLEY.

As this communication did not answer the question raised, the following letter was addressed to the Minister:—

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge and thank you for your letter dated the 21st December, which does not, however, elucidate the point upon which my Council is anxious to obtain your opinion.

It appreciates that a midwife, whether acting in that capacity, or as a maternity nurse, is under the jurisdiction of the Central Midwives Board. What it wishes to know is what authority will deal with a State Registered Nurse who is not a Midwife, when acting as a Maternity Nurse, and who holds the First Certificate of the Central Midwives Board, if her professional skill, or her personal conduct is called in question?

The Certificate, under which she is working as a Maternity Nurse expressly states:—

"This Certificate *does not* entitle the pupil whose name is inserted hereon to admission to the Roll of Midwives or authorise her to hold herself out as certified under the Midwives Acts, 1902-1936."

In these circumstances will the Maternity Nurse be dealt with by the General Nursing Council for England and Wales, under the authority of which she is registered by Act of Parliament, but which has not defined a course of training for Maternity Nurses or examined them, and does not give them a certificate as Maternity Nurses, or by the Central Midwives Board, which has done both, but whose authority, under the Midwives Acts, appears to be limited to securing the better training of *Midwives* and to regulating their practice?

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,  
ALICE STEWART BRYSON,  
Secretary.

This letter has been acknowledged.

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