

### The Public Need Protection.

The above letter does not reply directly to the questions.

1. The Act makes provision for a uniform for Assistant Nurses. What the British College of Nurses Ltd. wants to know is: Has their uniform been agreed or not, or are they permitted to wear any garb they choose?

#### Section 7.

The reply is not direct. We did not enquire about Agencies. At the present time the Ministry of Labour supplies the Nurses to those institutions in need of them.

Who is responsible for their selection, we do not know, but apparently Assistant Nurses whose names are *not* on the Roll, may be supplied, as in the case in which the Council of the British College of Nurses Ltd., asked for information. Apparently semi-qualified women calling themselves Assistant Nurses are at liberty to do so, and apparently, so far, their uniform has not been defined, and when it is, it cannot be made compulsory that they should wear it. We hope Miss D. M. Smith, Chairman, and the G.N.C., will take steps at an early date to protect the public on the issues involved.

## FEDERAL CONFERENCE IN SYDNEY.

### PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS MUST BE PRESERVED INTACT.

Strong appeals to members of the nursing organisations in the different States to think as Australians and not as members of different States were made by several speakers at the conference of the Council of the Australian Nursing Federation. The principal speaker, Miss J. Bell, President of the Royal Victorian College of Nursing, a former Matron of the Royal Melbourne Hospital and Matron-in-chief of the Australian Army Nursing Service in the last war, said that nurses were facing the most far-reaching challenges to their profession. One of the first things with which they must be concerned was the maintenance of their professional freedom.

"While fully acknowledging our obligations to the medical profession, our loyalty and co-operation while working under their direction," she said, "we must at the same time preserve our freedom to work out our salvation in our own way. We also want to be allowed to shape our destiny as a body of professional women, unfettered by political dominance and control."

#### No Official Recognition for Unqualified Practitioners.

"Professional standards must be preserved intact. It would be a suicidal policy to permit any tampering with or lowering of the standards that have been achieved by the State registration of nurses after years of agitation, hard work and propaganda. Any panic suggestion of giving official recognition to unqualified practitioners must be strongly opposed."

## UNQUALIFIED NURSES ORGANISE.

With the ardent encouragement of the Royal College of Nursing, "The National Association of Assistant Nurses" has been formed to express the demands of unqualified and semi-trained Nurses, when the first annual meeting was recently held in the Cowdray Hall of the College. Miss L. Snowden, Lady Supervisor, Essex County Council, whose policy of de-grading nursing standards has been actively prosecuted for many years, was in the chair, supported by Miss L. H. Charley and Miss M. Wenden (Royal College of Nursing).

Miss Charley, of the Royal College, submitted the draft

constitution, and Mrs. Lovegrove, the Hon. Secretary, took an active part in discussion.

The first annual report gave a short history of the movement, and gratefully detailed the steps taken by the Royal College of Nursing towards its formation, Miss Snowden and Miss Charley have been the active organisers of the constitution.

It is recommended: (a) That these unqualified and semi-trained women should be paid £220—£5—£260 per annum, and the salary of untrained Assistant Nurses be £200—£5—£220. (b) The sick pay regulations, hours of duty and pension should be the same as those laid down by the Rushcliffe Committee. (c) Assistant Nurses in industry should not pay unemployment insurance.

The subscription to the Association of Assistant Nurses is at the rate of 12s. annually—which they can well afford, as they only pay *one* guinea for legal status when placed on the Roll of the General Nursing Council—and the down-trodden Registered Nurses, who pay £5 5s. for registration, are compelled to finance any deficit in the organisation of the Roll of semi-trained competitors, as provided by Rule 19 of the Nurses Act, 1943.

The annual election of officers and Council is now proceeding.

The proceedings of the meeting closed with a hearty vote of thanks to Miss Snowden and the other members of the Royal College of Nursing.

We wonder what the State Registered members of the Royal College of Nursing are doing in this matter. Of course, assistant nurses have the right to organise as they please, but the Council of the Royal College, mostly matrons in high places, have no right to use its authority to undermine the status and stability of its State Registered constituency without their consent. So far as we know, no general meeting of members has been summoned to consider the de-grading of Registered Nurses, and their economic stability.

## THE PASSING BELL.

On April 24th, 1944, Mrs. Rebecca Strong, O.B.E., passed to her rest at "Heathfield," Vicars Cross, Chester, aged 100 years. Presumably the oldest trained nurse in the world, her recent hundredth birthday was notified with warm congratulations throughout the nursing world at home and abroad, and for a centenarian she was wonderfully active mentally and physically.

Mrs. Strong's nursing history is well known to us all, one of the first Nightingale probationers at St. Thomas's Hospital,—she initiated many nursing reforms—and the profession has to thank her for inaugurating the first scheme for the Preliminary Education of Probationers, at the Glasgow Royal Infirmary, and no doubt some suitable memorial will in time commemorate her unique attainments in the Nursing World.

Mrs. Strong will be held in affectionate remembrance by many nurses throughout the world.

It is with the deepest regret that the War Office records that the following 40 officers of the Army Nursing Services are now presumed to have been killed in action at sea on 12th February, 1944, when the ship in which they were travelling was lost as a result of enemy action.

#### Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service.

Matron Miss E. M. E. Ievers, S.R.N.; Sister Miss S. G. Richardson, S.R.N., S.C.M.; Miss Freda Airey, S.R.N.

#### Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service Reserve.

Miss J. K. Atkin, S.R.N.; Miss E. M. Bateman, S.R.N.; Miss A. Brown, S.R.N.; Miss I. Burrows, S.R.N.; Miss E. A. Dalgarno, S.R.N., S.C.M.; Miss E. D. Dann, S.R.N.;

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)