

## The British College of Nurses, Ltd.

BY THE KIND INVITATION of the President, Mrs. M. C. Barber, D.N. (Lond.), a meeting of the Council of the British College of Nurses, Ltd., was held at 17, Marine Avenue, Westcliff, Essex, on Thursday, September 23rd, 1954, at 2.30 p.m.

The President, Mrs. Barber, was in the chair. Prayers having been read, the Minutes of the last meeting were read and confirmed.

On rising, the President reported that a telegram of congratulations had been sent to Sir Waldron and Lady Smithers on their Golden Wedding Anniversary, to which they had replied:—

“Shelleys,  
Knockholt, Kent.

September, 1954.

“We want to thank you and all our kind friends for your great kindness in sending us greetings, telegrams, cards and flowers on the occasion of our Golden Wedding Day.

We are very proud to know we have so many friends and your kindness is deeply appreciated.

Waldron and Marjory Smithers.”

In drawing the attention of the meeting to the distressing circumstances of those Nurse Pensioners, who were pensioned before 1948, the President stated that, “A letter had been sent to the Right Hon. Iain MacLeod, M.P., Minister of Health, pointing out that she had communicated with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on this subject, who replied that he had passed the letter to the Minister of Health.” The President stressed that “as many of these old nurses, who had borne the burden of long hours and low salaries, are now in very poor circumstances; she would be grateful to hear from the Minister of any progress in this connection.” To which the Minister replied:—

“July 23rd, 1954.

“Madam,

In reply to your letter of the 6th July, I am directed by the Minister of Health to say that he noticed from your letter of the 16th April that you were aware of the increase of some pensions provided for in the Pensions Increase Act, 1952. There is little that he can add to that information. He has every sympathy with nurses who retired before 1948 with small resources but he has no power to augment their incomes. The National Health Service Superannuation Scheme did not, of course, come into general operation until 5th July, 1948.

You will no doubt have seen in the Press a recent announcement that pensions under the National Insurance Acts are to be increased in the near future. This will bring some measure of relief to those who are entitled to such pensions. The Minister is not aware of any proposals which would have the effect of raising the pensions already granted to nurses.

I am, Madam,  
Your Obedient Servant,  
A. J. Moore.

Mrs. M. C. Barber, S.R.N., R.M.N.,  
D.N. (Lond.), F.B.C.N.,  
The British College of Nurses, Ltd.,  
19, Queen's Gate,  
London, S.W.7.”

No wonder we are short of nurses. Who would join a profession and be treated as these old nurses are?

On considering the Minister's letter it was unanimously agreed that an answer appealing for his consideration be sent, stating that the Council of the British College of Nurses, Ltd., feel that these nurses are being over-looked under the present legislation, and beseech that they may be included in the scheme for elderly people at present under discussion.

### Correspondence.

A letter was received from a member expressing perplexity and disappointment that although a fully qualified

registered nurse, S.R.N., in this country, she finds that she—with others—are not recognised in U.S.A. (Pennsylvania) as registered nurses, unless taking State Board Examinations there.

The reply to her in explanation being—that the Board of Education in that country is supreme in laying down the rules permitting anyone to practise there.

Therefore, should she wish to become an accepted registered nurse in U.S.A. she would need to undertake training in those subjects not satisfactory to the American standing.

This may seem very strange to one having worked in this country, but it must be understood that America's first objection is rather more academic than practical and that is the difference in both our countries—acceptance of Florence Nightingale's teaching, the latter being what British nursing has always stressed.

While wishing Miss B. Cooper, much success and happiness in her new appointment as Matron at Overstrand Hall Convalescent Home, Cromer, Norfolk, the Council were sorry to learn that owing to distance she cannot complete her term of office as a councillor; in expressing her regret she writes, “It has been of much help to me in my work to share in such inspired work.”

In reply to a letter received from Miss Jessie M. Wilson, M.B.C.N., notifying she had been appointed Director of Nursing and Principal of the School of Nursing at Niagara Falls General Hospital, Niagara, Ontario, Canada, it was proposed that very warm wishes be extended to Miss Wilson for a very successful and happy reign in this office, and of congratulations also on the charm of her new surroundings, of which she writes:—

“This small city as you can imagine is a very interesting place. The falls and beautiful gardens attract so many tourists. Just recently some 185,000 tons of rock have fallen off the American side, changing the shape of the falls; and bringing additional tourist trade to look across from Canada to the American.”

A letter from a member expressing deep gratitude for a weekly grant awarded from the Ethel Mary Fletcher Benevolent Fund, was received.

The Council, in considering an application received from a member as to whether it were possible to obtain a loan, in order to take a Nursing Administrator's Hospital Course, unanimously agreed to grant a loan of £50 for this educational purpose.

### Election of Fellows and Members.

Applications for membership were received, and all were elected.

### Financial Statement.

The Financial Statement was reported and received.

### Gifts.

From Miss Agnes Bone: “Florence Nightingale Letters,” written by Florence Nightingale to her predecessor, Mrs. Hayward, when Matron of Haydock Hospital, who gave them many years ago to Miss Bone for safe-keeping.

From a colleague in Australia: “The Royal Tour in W.A.,” a *Western Mail* Pictorial Souvenir.

A Fellow of the College writes: “I was very distressed to read in the London *Times* about the Q.A. Sister convicted of embezzling mess funds at Hindhead, and sentenced to five months at Holloway. A very severe sentence for ONLY money matters; if she had been criminally negligent over a patient's life, I could have understood it.

“Giving over the Q.A. Nursing Service to Military Law would seem to be the danger I always feared it might be. The very high standard my service had would seem to be threatened by the overloading of nurses with responsibilities other than those they had been trained for. . . .

“But the thought of that Captain Hall being in Holloway has just haunted me, even though I do not know her. Of

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