

The Infectious Hospitals Matrons' and Nurses' Association.

A MEETING of the Infectious Hospitals Matrons' and Nurses' Association, by the kind invitation of the Matron—Miss M. Phillips, S.R.N., R.F.N., S.C.M., and the Hospital Management Committee, was held at Monsall Hospital, Newton Heath, Manchester, on Saturday, 18th September, 1954, at 2.30 p.m.

When all were assembled, Miss Phillips expressed the great pleasure it gave her to introduce the President, Miss A. A. Ward, Matron of Neasden Hospital, heartily welcoming her and all present who met this day to form a Branch of the Association—and to whom Monsall Hospital extended hospitality—in their collaborations for this purpose.

The President, Miss A. A. Ward, was in the Chair and on rising, thought the meeting would be interested to know something of the origin and objects of the Fever Nurses' Association, which was founded in 1909 by the late Dr. Biernacki, then Medical Superintendent of Plaistow Hospital, who thus first secured State recognition of Fever Nursing.

From that time the Association introduced and maintained a high standard of training for Fever Nurses, carried out by means of examination and awarding certificates of qualification until 1919, when the passing of the Nurses Acts came into force and the General Nursing Councils became responsible.

It was, however, in 1926 that the Infectious Hospitals Matrons' Association was formed, which worked for the betterment of fever nursing and nurses and through the strong support of the Matrons of the Association, were able, when the closure of the Fever Nurses' Register was threatened, to approach the Associations of the Medical Superintendents, the British Medical Association, the Minister of Health, and the General Nursing Council for England and Wales, and we have now a better chance of holding together.

Although infectious diseases such as diphtheria and scarlet fever had decreased, other troubles arose such as poliomyelitis when the work of skilled infectious nursing provided in the fever hospitals was just as important as that of the general hospitals in spite of those of the latter being of the opinion that they were the most important.

It was then proposed and unanimously carried that a letter be sent to the General Nursing Council for England and Wales requesting that the Infectious Hospitals Matrons' and Nurses' Association be granted representation on its Governing Body.

Formation of North-Western Branch.

Arising out of the Annual Meeting held at Barnsley Hospital—that (1) branches of the Association be formed—Miss Phillips reported that having communicated with some 29 hospitals (some of which did not now exist) the response was such that she proposed the founding of the North-Western Branch of the Association. This was seconded by Miss M. Holland, S.R.N., R.F.N., Matron of Fazackerley Hospital, Liverpool, and carried unanimously.

(2) It was then proposed by Miss M. B. Wright, S.R.N., R.F.N., Matron, Westhulme Hospital, Oldham, and seconded by Miss D. Etta Astle, Matron, Infectious

Diseases Hospital, Devonshire Road, Blackpool, and carried unanimously that Miss M. Phillips be appointed Chairman of the North-Western Branch.

(3) That Miss V. M. Caldwell, S.R.N., R.F.N., Matron of Cherry Tree Hospital, Cherry Tree Road, Stockport, be elected Hon. Secretary. This was carried unanimously.

The Chairman pointed out that THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING, through the sympathy, understanding and admiration of the late Mrs. Bedford Fenwick (Editor), had always been the champion of fever nursing.

Date of next executive meeting was arranged for Saturday, 27th November, 1954, at 2 p.m., to be held at Clayponds Hospital, Ealing, by the kind invitation of the Matron, Miss Gregory, and the Hospital Management Committee.

Very hearty votes of thanks, accorded to the Hospital Management Committee for the privilege of holding this meeting at Monsall Hospital, and to the Matron for kind hospitality and for her able leadership in the formation of this branch of the Association, terminated the meeting.

It was greatly appreciated that the Physician Superintendent, Dr. D. C. Liddle, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H., then joined the members and delighted everyone with a talk which he gave on "The Trend of Infectious Diseases." After which his keen audience, on questions being invited, showed lively response and warm appreciation.

A delightful tea was served, followed by a tour of the hospital, conducted by Dr. Liddle and the Matron.

Every type of infectious disease is treated—save perhaps smallpox, tuberculosis and acute chest diseases.

The Geriatric block, the recently modernised cubicle block, was equipped with every device for the nursing and treatment of these cases, but perhaps the most arresting was the newly equipped X-ray department which included the most modern developments of that section. Its magnificent capacity, it would seem, could serve a whole city.

In the staff quarters much care had been taken in providing maximum comfort with simple artistic furnishings—and the bedrooms could be a real room of one's own.

Much could be written of this progressive and busy hospital, which one leaves with a vivid memory of kindness and efficiency.

A. S. B.

The Trend of Infectious Diseases

THOSE OF US who have had the privilege of working in Isolation Hospitals have seen great changes in the course of infectious diseases and in the function of the hospitals in recent years. We have seen Diphtheria, which not so many years ago was a dreaded Scourge and was the cause of illness in over 50,000 people and the cause of death of between 1,500 to 2,000 annually, so reduced in incidence that in 1952 only 376 cases were notified and 32 deaths occurred. In Monsall Hospital, where pre-war we admitted 1,500 to 2,000 cases of Diphtheria annually, not one single case of clinical Diphtheria has been admitted this year so far, and the only diphtheritic infections we have seen have been two diphtheria carriers.

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