

old men were pensioned off and a new class of "children" instituted.

These are children in reality, generally selected from the families of deceased officers of the three Services and appointed as Children of the Almonry. To these children, for aiding their education, financial help is given. They do not attend the ceremony personally but are represented by four children selected from the schools of the parishes of St. John the Evangelist with St. Stephen and St. Margaret Westminster. The Royal Maundy, as it now exists, is made up as follows, the amounts quoted being for male recipients, in a red leather purse with white thongs.

	£	s.	d.
(1) To the redemption of the Sovereign's gown worn on the day of distribution	1	0	0
(2) Allowance in lieu of provisions	1	10	0
In a white leather purse with red thongs—			
The number of pence, according to the age of the reigning Sovereign in silver coins, specially struck for the occasion by the Royal Mint, and consisting (in 1951) of five pence, six twopenny, five threepenny and six fourpenny pieces, amounting in this year to	4	8	
In a white leather purse with green thongs—			
Allowance in lieu of clothing	2	5	0
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	£4	19	8

Women received £4 9s. 8d., their clothing allowance being £1 15s. in a green purse.

The number of recipients is also the same as the number of years of the Sovereign's age, therefore in 1951, when His Majesty was in his fifty-sixth year, 56 men and 56 women received Royal Maundy.

A set of Maundy coins is composed of one penny, one twopenny, one threepenny and one fourpenny piece, amounting to tenpence, and in 1951 five coins of each denomination with extra fourpenny and twopenny pieces were needed to obtain the fifty-six pence shown above. Recipients are chosen from those applying to the Royal Almonry for assistance, preference being given to those who have been employees of labour. As may be imagined, the gifts are prized far above their actual monetary value, and to be included among the recipients is considered an honour.

The year 1932 was a memorable one, as it was the first occasion since the reign of King James II that the Sovereign had personally distributed the Maundy gifts. On this occasion Their Majesties King George the Fifth and Queen Mary were present, and the King handed to each recipient the traditional red and white purses.

In 1936 His Majesty King Edward the Eighth followed the example of his father and personally distributed his gifts.

His Majesty King George the Sixth and Queen Elizabeth were present at the Maundy ceremony in Westminster Abbey in 1940, 1944, 1945, 1946, 1948, 1950 and 1951.

On each occasion the King personally handed his Maundy Gifts to those assembled to receive them. A. R. B.

The National Council of Nurses of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE Meeting of the National Council of Nurses will be held on Thursday the 12th May, 1955, at St. Pancras Hospital, St. Pancras Way, London, N.W.1, at 2.0 p.m.

A banquet to commemorate the fiftieth year of the National Council of Nurses of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, will be held at the Royal College of Surgeons, Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, W.C.1, on Thursday the 12th May, 1955, at 7.30 p.m. Her Highness The Princess Marie Louise has graciously consented to be present on this occasion. All tickets for this banquet have been taken up.

The Salary Award! and All That!

WELL, WE'VE GOT THE RISE! When we've put away the microscopes that enable us to see it, we shall probably decide that we've got just what we deserved, and no more.

The truth of the matter is that the Staff Side of the Nurses' and Midwives' Whitley Council does not seem to thoroughly appreciate the day to day problems that face nursing administrators in hospitals, or to adequately bargain for and present the needs of the profession.

In what other profession do newly qualified members receive the same amount of increase in salary as the experts in their field?

Would Consultants in the medical world expect newly qualified young doctors to receive the same amount of increase as they do themselves?

But the treatment does not end there. In order to complete the spirit of parsimony, resident emoluments are so increased that the award is almost completely wiped out.

It is common knowledge, made dreary by repetition, that most hospitals are short of all grades of nurses. Excluding some of the more famous teaching hospitals, and a few favoured large general hospitals, practically all others suffer lamentable shortage of staff, whereby it may fall to the lot of one nurse to do the work of two.

And so we go on, and on, and on, with no possible remedy brightening the professional horizon. No one is happy in hospitals any more. Matrons are sorely pressed and dispirited. Sisters can no longer expect the degree and type of service to their patients that they are entitled to expect. Worst of all, patients have to put up with second best conditions in circumstances when they should be receiving everything of the best. Through their National Health contributions they pay well for service when they are ill, but they do not always get their money's worth.

There are many other grievances which nurses have to bear, besides those connected with shortage of nurses and meagre salaries. There is the constant chipping and niggling at senior nurses' authority, status and privileges. Lay persons are subtly trying to limit and stultify the influence of Matrons in their hospitals.

The pamphlet on the "Tripartite control of hospitals" goes a long way to remedy this state of affairs, but as yet, many Hospital Management Committees are ignorant of this publication, or have not had it circulated freely among its members for open discussion and action. Is it to be wondered at that when Committees advertise for Matrons, the applicants for the posts now number less than 30, when in the good old days they numbered over 100?

Also, by making one professional nurse the Matron of a group of hospitals—in some cases of different types of hospitals, some types of which the Matron has had no previous nursing experience—those responsible are limiting the number of top positions. No profession is likely to prosper where the key positions are few and far between. Every nurse who does not marry, one day hopes to hold a high position in her chosen profession. Therefore, every hospital should have its own Matron, so that there will be sufficient top jobs for those who wish to work for them, and thus bring more students into the profession in order to compete for them.

One other grumble which is being thoroughly aired in hospitals generally is that concerning the London weighting allowance for non-resident nurses. By awarding them up to £30 p.a. extra, they now pay £3 p.a. for food on duty, laundry, daily baths, and a fair share of other resident amenities; this would seem a doubtful measure of justice. Surely, the cost of living is as burdensome on the resident nurses as on the non-resident, particularly as more money is being lopped off their salaries for their keep in the nurses' homes. Is it fair to make it cheaper for non-resident nurses to live out, by making it dearer for those who prefer to live in?

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