

## Exchange of Student Nurses.

### New Training Link between General and Mental Hospitals.

HOSPITAL AUTHORITIES throughout England and Wales have been asked by the Minister of Health, Mr. Iain Macleod, to promote schemes wherever possible for the interchange of student nurses between general and mental hospitals.

In the Minister's view this step will help to improve the quality of the mental nurse's training, introduce a valuable element into the training of general nurses, and have a beneficial effect in breaking down the isolation from which many mental hospitals still suffer.

The General Nursing Council has agreed that for student mental nurses a six months' secondment to a general hospital would be satisfactory for that part of the syllabus dealing with bodily diseases. The Council is also willing to consider proposals for the secondment of student general nurses to mental hospitals for part of their training.

Mr. Macleod has asked those authorities who have general hospitals which are nurse training schools to give the fullest co-operation to mental hospital authorities in planning schemes. He recommends consultation with the Area nurse training committees at an early stage. The suggestion is also made that the quality of mental nurse training might be improved if greater responsibility were given to Nurse Tutors for the practical training in the wards.

The Minister also announces an important change in the qualifications required for appointment to the most senior posts in mental hospitals. Formerly promotion to Matron or Deputy Matron in mental and mental deficiency hospitals was limited to applicants who had trained in both mental and general nursing. The Central Health Services Council has expressed the view that this requirement is a deterrent to recruitment in the mental nursing field, and the hospital authorities are now advised that they should not regard candidates for the senior posts as ineligible solely because they do not possess the double qualification, if they are otherwise suitable.

We consider this scheme would have been a wonderful advantage during the late War when the General Hospitals occupied part of the Mental Hospitals.

In the arrangement for a six months' secondment to a General Hospital, *surgical* experience is what mental nurses mostly require, as there is plenty of experience in dealing with bodily diseases in mental nursing.

It has been thought that general nursing is a misnomer because mental nursing is so important that it should form a part of all nurses' training, but at the same time care must be taken that this short experience should not be considered sufficient for a general trained nurse to be thought of having mental training, or a mental trained nurse having had general training.

The opinion of most mental hospital matrons is that they would not have considered themselves proficient in their work had they not also taken their general nursing training.

The Central Health Services Council may try to appoint senior nurses with only one qualification but this would be a retrograde step, and would cause great harm to mental nursing status, after nursing in mental hospitals has been brought up to the present high level, and will only by-pass present difficulties.

The male mental nurses realise this and now have more than sufficient doubly trained staff.

We do agree with the suggestion that the quality of mental nurse training might be improved if greater responsibility were given to Nurse Tutors for the practical training in the wards.

We trust that in relation to the sincerity of the Minister's suggestion, the new scheme will begin by the example of the large London General Nurse-Training Schools.

## News of Chinese Nurses.

ONE OF OUR revered readers, who has had long years of experience in China, has sent us the following news concerning members of our profession:—

I was very interested to receive the copy of the Nurses Journal which has come to you from Formosa.

In 1950 the activities of the Medical Association and the Nurses' Association in China, were forbidden. Then later all medical workers trained and untrained were formed into a political union and a conference was called in Peking soon afterwards.

The associations were re-organised under the new Public Health Department with Madame Feng-Fu-Hsiang as the head, and the wife of the present Premier, Chou-En-Lai, as the Vice-President. What further changes have been made, I do not know.

Most of the leading nurses had already left China for Formosa. There they carry on the Nurses' Association entirely up to international standards. There has been great advance in all fields of endeavour. The hospital situation and the growth of nurses' training have filled our hearts with thankfulness.

Now it seems they have been able to publish the Nurses' Journal again, and the copy you have sent is the second one of the series.

This one has the New Year greetings picture as its front-piece (their New Year comes about February). Then it shows a photograph of Red Cross Nurses and assistants. There is a list of the newly-elected committees of the Association of China and news of various meetings and functions. Then follow articles on "Teaching in Schools of Nursing," "Organising an Out-Patient Department," articles on "Nutrition," "Care of Teeth," and so on.

A number of these are copied from the American Journal of Nursing, so there is no need to translate them from the Chinese as these things are not new to British nurses.

In everything that comes from Formosa now a days it is taken for granted that they will be back in the homeland soon. This Journal just speaks of "China" and they are the original Nurses' Association of China on an island now called Free China.

As the newspapers tell us, Free China sends planes over dropping leaflets to tell the people not to lose hope, that they will be free again sometime.

We do not get any direct news from the hospitals in China itself, but we know that the free Christian nursing spirit and its activities are suppressed, or used first and foremost for political purposes.

Several newspaper reports lately have told of the re-organisation of the old native medicine practitioners, so the professional standards too have changed. Freedom and democracy as we know it in the West does not obtain today as we constantly are being reminded.

It is all a very sad picture, but we keep faith that truth and righteousness will triumph eventually and the whole world shall be free again.

### Death of Miss Revena Tien.

We were grieved recently to hear of the death of Miss Revena Tien, who was the well-known and indefatigable Secretary of the Nurses' Association of China. She endured much hardship during the Japanese occupation by her loyalty, but managed to save the new headquarters building and keep the Nurses' Association examinations going through those years of war. Since the change of Government she had been on the staff of the Lester Hospital in Shanghai, China, but died after a protracted illness on March 11th. One of her much cherished memories was of the I.C.N. Congress in London, when Queen Mary and Queen Elizabeth shook hands with the overseas delegates at the Garden Party in Buckingham Palace.

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