

## POOR LAW HOSPITAL NURSES IN MANCHESTER AND THE COLLEGE OF NURSING.

(Communicated.)

A very successful meeting was held on Saturday, June 2nd, at the Women's Union Rooms of the University at Manchester.

The meeting was called by Miss Smith, of the Withington Hospitals. She is now the representative of the Poor Law Infirmary Matrons' Association in the Manchester area and wanted to meet the Superintendent Nurses, so took the opportunity of asking all the Matrons of the other Poor-Law Hospitals to meet the Superintendent Nurses and their staffs.

About 150 certificated nurses were present and a very happy and interesting afternoon was spent.

Miss Barton, President of the Poor Law Infirmary Matrons' Association, gave an interesting account of the Association and its work, and on behalf of the Association, welcomed the Superintendent Nurses, who have lately been invited to join as Associates.

Miss Rundle, Secretary of the College of Nursing, then gave a full account of the origin, objects and aims of the College, appealing to those present to realise their responsibility and write, making suggestions for improvements and arrangements of the College.

Miss Girdlestone, late Matron of the Crumpsall Infirmary, who was very heartily welcomed by her numerous old friends, urged the claims and advantages of the College, and said that nurses did trust their Matrons, and wanted their Matrons to plan for them and knew that the Matrons would do their best for them. These remarks were very heartily cheered.

Miss Gibson, late Matron of the Birmingham Infirmary, received a very warm welcome, and advised all nurses to keep their aims and ideals high—"put your star right up and try to follow it." She advised all nurses to read both sides of the question and decide for themselves what side they should take and to stick to it.

A very hearty vote of thanks was proposed to Miss Smith for getting up the meeting and taking the chair, also to the speakers, by Miss Burgess, Matron of Crumpsall Infirmary, seconded by Miss Ross, of Hope Hospital.

The audience was entertained to tea by Miss Smith, and those who wished were taken round the Royal Infirmary by Miss Sparshott.

We have to thank Miss Barton for the above report of the meeting at Manchester.

We note Miss Rundle's invitation to the nurses "to realise their responsibility and write making suggestions" to the College.

We advise every certificated nurse to demand that means be taken at once by the Council of the College to give the rank and file of the profession *direct representation* on it, when they will then be placed in a position of responsibility, and

able to make suggestions at first hand, and not by proxy.

Miss Girdlestone's attitude of mind towards certificated nurses is now obsolete—they are not children who require to be "done for," but educated, responsible adults, who have a right to exercise freedom of conscience and action for themselves. Of course, we want the co-operation of the Matrons, as colleagues, but not as dictators, and the best of them are working with the nurses in a whole-hearted and generous manner. We are glad to note Miss Gibson's advice to read both sides of the nursing controversy, but regret to note that at the meeting at Manchester, and indeed at all meetings convened by the College of Nursing, the self-governing State Registrars are never invited to present their point of view. Why? Because it is unanswerable, we presume.

## THE SUPPLY OF NURSES COMMITTEE.

(Concluded from page 384.)

*Conditions of Service.*—In regard to the Conditions of Service the Committee are of opinion that it is possible to make certain alterations which may act as inducements to nurses to remain longer in the Service and possibly attract recruits.

They hold very strongly that the health and efficiency of the nursing staff depend upon the certainty of regular and adequate leave. If nurses continue at work beyond the limit of their strength, their breakdown is serious, and in some cases permanent. This could be avoided by an increase in the trained staff. At present there is no margin for sickness or leave, or for nursing special cases. Numbers are lost to the Service because they are unable to bear the strain.

The regulation leave might be sufficient if it were absolutely regular, but more relaxation is required, so that a tired Sister may be relieved without throwing extra work on other people.

In regard to Pay, Gratuities and Pensions the Committee welcome the increased rate of pay, but would have liked to see a system of gratuities for nurses of £5 for each six months' service with an increment of £1 on the gratuity for each successive half year after the first six months, and for other grades in proportion, to be paid on the termination of service. They think that insistence on the condition of service for the duration of the war may act as a deterrent to some who doubt their ability to face the long service which might be required. They consider that some further inducement should be held out to those willing to sign for the duration of the war, and that the systems of Q.A.I.N.S. and the T.F.N.S. should be assimilated in this respect.

The Committee regard the scale of pensions offered to nurses whose permanent breakdown is due to military service as quite inadequate, and recommend that the scale should be raised to a minimum of £52 for total disablement, irrespective of rank.

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