

THE COLLEGE OF NURSING, LTD.

NATIONAL UNION OF TRAINED NURSES.

NURSING CONFERENCE—(continued).

JUNE 7TH.

On the morning of June 7th the Matron Members of the College held a private Session on the subject of "Special and Small Hospitals in Relation to General Training Schools." Why the Matrons should meet in secret on the subject is not clear, but it is certain that they will not be able to settle the question within closed doors.

AFTERNOON SECTION.

In the afternoon Miss E. S. Haldane, LL.D., presided, the subject under discussion being "The Part to be Played by the Nursing Profession in the State During and After the War."

The first paper was presented by Dr. Hyslop-Thomson, D.P.H., County Medical Officer of Health for Hertfordshire, on "How the Nursing Profession can assist in the Scheme of Reconstruction After the War." The speaker said that reconstruction revolved round the question of public health and, amongst other things included in the scheme, were the housing question, child welfare, education, and the care of the sick. The nursing profession would occupy a unique and important position in reconstruction.

DR. C. J. THOMAS next spoke on "The Future Work of the School Nurse," and emphasised the universality of her influence. In no other Service were the nurses so universally and closely connected with the people as a whole. There was not even a class distinction. They visited the secondary as well as the elementary schools, nor was their influence confined to parents and children. People who had no children came flocking on to the Care Committees. The Education Bill of Mr. Herbert Fisher was more a Health Bill than an Education Bill. At last the importance of the physical condition of the scholars was appreciated, both in the ordinary schools and the continuation schools.

It had needed the crucible of war to show the School Nurse at her true value. All should combine to see that her remuneration was commensurate with the value of her service and her responsible position.

Of the remaining papers, that on "The Tuberculosis Nurse" was read by Dr. Jessie M. Campbell, and Colonel Thackray Parsons dealt with "The Nursing Profession in Relation to the proposed Ministry of Health."

MISS JOLLEY, late Matron of the Royal Southern Hospital, Liverpool, gave some impressions of Nursing at the Front.

The discussion was opened by MISS HAMILTON, Matron of the Royal Chest Hospital, City Road, but the audience had not got the "Conference Habit" and was plainly there to receive, not to confer. But it is much that the Matrons of the "large London Training Schools" should at last have left their fastnesses and met together in a Nursing Conference. No doubt the habit will grow, and with it the power of debate.

The Bristol Branch held a meeting last week at the Red Cross Hospital, Ashton, by kind invitation of the Commandant and the Matron.

The House, some of which dates back to the Middle Ages, stands in a beautiful deer park which has been in existence 500 years. The patients look out on long stretches of undulating pasture land, with magnificent trees and, in the distance, the blue hills of Somerset.

Miss Lloyd Morgan welcomed her guests at the entrance, and conducted them over the hospital, which is charmingly arranged for the comfort and happiness of its officer patients. The violet ray apparatus for stimulating circulation and the whirlpool bath for injured limbs and neurasthenic cases were of special interest.

After the hospital had been visited, Miss E. L. C. Eden gave a short account of the progress of the Union and the present position in regard to State Registration, which she regarded as hopeful.

She reminded her hearers of the pioneer work done by the Union in initiating its system of post-graduate education by means of local branches and showed in what a business-like way the profession was organized and how promising the outlook was when war broke out, and it was felt that all energies should be concentrated on the care of the suffering.

With regard to State Registration, she explained that the Nurses' Societies were standing firmly together in support of the Central Committee's Bill for State Registration, which had passed its first reading in the House of Commons in 1914 and was now amended up to date and ready for Parliament. The Central Committee was the expert and representative body which had studied the question for many years, had formed public opinion, and had made State Registration a certainty. It was, therefore, beyond dispute the body to which the nursing profession owed loyalty. It stood for the principles in which all those who understood economic conditions believed, namely (1) a three years' training in a hospital (or infirmary) and one centrally set examination as a qualification for the register after the period of grace; (2) supplemental registers only for those branches (male and mental nurses) which could not be compared by the public with the general trained nurse; and (3) an independent council which would represent opinion fairly and freely.

Miss Eden expressed the conviction that these principles were bound to win recognition and were rapidly doing so, and she trusted that the College would not delay the advent of State Registration any longer by opposing them.

A warm vote of thanks was passed to the Matron and Commandant, and the company dispersed after a very pleasant gathering.

Miss Kennedy, who has succeeded Miss Symonds as Secretary of the Branch will be glad to hear of new members at 6, Berkely Square, Clifton.

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