

Dr. Saleeby concluded by emphasising the four points he had laid down, and said that the proposals for a Ministry of Health might be perverted unless disinterested people kept them on the right lines.

Miss Isabel Macdonald pointed out the danger of the tendency to put health work into the hands of the incompetent, and said that the training she had found most useful for work of this kind was that given in the wards of a hospital. Health workers should have a full nursing qualification in addition to training in hygiene. Preventive nursing was even more important than curative.

Mr. Williams emphasised the need for expert knowledge on the part of welfare supervisors in factories, and Mr. C. H. Wigington spoke strongly of the need for nurses in factories where the work was of a dangerous character.

THE NEED OF THE CO-OPERATION OF THE TRAINED NURSE IN THE EFFECTIVE WORKING OF A MINISTRY OF HEALTH.

Miss Helen Pearse, who regarded the co-operation of the trained nurse as essential to any effective Ministry of Health, impressed upon her hearers the value of training in helping them to preserve their own health, and consequently the good temper so important in a nurse. Training also helped a nurse to estimate facts, to give proof of knowledge, to attain accuracy, and to condense and write down the result of her observations for the benefit of others. In connection with the administration of public health work nurses were essential and she considered that a trained nurse should be head of any Maternity and Child Welfare Department. She spoke of the value of the work of School Nurses, and said that district nurses were a credit to private endeavour. She emphasised the fact that only women who had expert knowledge could effectively supervise others. It was sometimes asserted that nurses were not organisers. Nothing could be more ridiculous. From the moment a probationer entered a hospital she was obliged to organise in order to get through her work.

Miss Cancellor gave a personal account of public health work for which she considered desirable not only general training, but fever training, a knowledge of the manifestations of skin diseases and venereal diseases, as well as the certificates of the Central Midwives Board and the Sanitary Institute. She hoped that fully-trained nurses would help to administer the Ministry of Health Act; they knew they would have to help to work it.

Miss Beatrice Kent spoke of social work done at the Massachusetts General Hospital, the system employed, and the educational standard of the nurses and had with her for inspection the beautiful charts illustrative of the hospital's activities in this connection.

Miss Jentie Paterson expressed the view that women who had not had three years' training were employed as nurses by the London County Council, and were taking the pay which should be reserved for the fully-trained nurse. It was not right that this should be so.

Mrs. Bedford Fenwick said that when we had a Ministry of Health, she concluded that Dr. Saleeby anticipated it would exercise the same powers that the General Medical Council and the Central Midwives' Board which the Privy Council now did. He had not mentioned a General Nursing Council or a State Nursing Service, both of which were urgently required.

The Minister of Health would be faced with the question, "What is a trained nurse"? No uniform standard had ever been defined.

Trained nurses must endeavour to get a Nurses' Registration Bill passed without delay by the new Parliament, they had suffered severely from lack of organization during the war, and it was time that those who passed successfully through the recognised training should have the hall mark conferred by a State Register.

It was a fundamental necessity, if a Ministry of Health was to be a success, that a standard of training should be established for nurses as well as doctors and midwives, otherwise when a Minister of Health came to deal with nursing in relation to his Department he would have nothing to guide him.

Miss Macdonald warned trained nurses not to permit their legitimate work to be usurped, and mentioned that in several factories welfare supervisors, with no training, were earning from £400 to £800 per annum, while trained nurses were working under them at salaries of from £70 to £130. It lay with nurses to be alive to this danger. They must protect their own profession—no one else would do so.

RESOLUTIONS.

Dr. Saleeby then moved the following Resolution which was carried unanimously.

I.

That this meeting of the National Union of Trained Nurses welcomes the introduction of a Ministry of Health Bill by the Minister of Reconstruction, and, in view of the grave delay of the past eighteen months, and the danger of racial infection during demobilization, urges the Government to proceed with such a measure, as the foundation of racial, and therefore of all reconstruction.

Mrs. Bedford Fenwick proposed the following Resolution, which was seconded by Miss Jentie Paterson, and carried unanimously.

II.

That this meeting of the National Union of Trained Nurses urges upon the Government the need for the State Registration of Trained Nurses, and of a General Nursing Council as an indispensable corollary of the establishment of a Ministry of Health.

It was agreed that copies of these Resolutions, should be sent to the Prime Minister, Dr. Addison, Sir Auckland Geddes, Sir Robert Morrant and the Press.

The meeting closed with a vote of thanks to the chair and speakers, proposed by Miss Cancellor and seconded by Miss Marsters.

On either side of the entrance in the street, as the meeting assembled, a trained nurse, wearing

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