

## NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TRAINED NURSES OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

The Annual Meeting of the Grand Council, composed of the Delegates of Affiliated Societies of Trained Nurses, was held at 431, Oxford Street, London, W., on Friday, November 29th, at 4 p.m. The President, Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, was in the chair. The majority of the affiliated societies were represented. The absence of Miss B. Cutler, Hon. Secretary, owing to indisposition and absence from town, was much regretted, and the Council welcomed Miss Christina Forrest, the Hon. Treasurer, from Bournemouth.

### BUSINESS REFERRED TO IN MINUTES.

The Minutes having been read and confirmed, the President said, as referred to in the Minutes, the Hon. Secretary had sent the following letter to the Presidents of the Royal Free Hospital Nurses' League and the President of the Chelsea Infirmary Nurses' League, upon the retirement of these Leagues from the Council:—

### NO CHANGE IN THE PRINCIPLES OR POLICY OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TRAINED NURSES.

431, Oxford Street, London, W. 1,  
February 2nd, 1918.

DEAR MADAM,—At the annual meeting of the National Council of Trained Nurses of Great Britain and Ireland, held on December 15th, 1917, your letter, notifying that the League of Royal Free Hospital Nurses had decided to withdraw from affiliation, owing to the attitude adopted by the Council towards the College of Nursing, was read and directed to be recorded.

In notifying you of the fact, I was desired to say that the position of the National Council towards the question of the organisation of the Nursing Profession, and the State Registration of Nurses, is the same as when the League of Royal Free Hospital Nurses joined it. It has supported the Central Committee for the State Registration of Nurses in its demands for:—

(1) An Independent Governing Body for the organisation of the educational standards of the Nursing Profession, and the State Registration of Trained Nurses, on which they themselves have direct representation.

(2) The representation of the self-governing Societies of Nurses on the Provisional Nursing Council created under a Nurses' Registration Act, which Council will frame the rules which the Registered Nurses will have to obey.

(3) A One-Portal System of Registration after a three years' term of training in a hospital, or hospitals, and a central examination.

These principles for the organisation and good government of the Nursing Profession are incorporated in the Nurses Registration Bill, introduced into the House of Commons by Major Chapple on behalf of the Central Committee, to which are affiliated several of the most important Nurses' Organisations in the National Council.

That the Council of the College of Nursing, Ltd., has deliberately omitted these great principles in the Bill it has drafted is deeply to be regretted.

Beyond its support of the consistent policy of the Central Committee the National Council, as such, has, since the College was incorporated, taken no part in the controversy, as the interests of the nurses have been safeguarded by other organisations; but the Council is aware that many of its members are strongly opposed to the policy of the College of Nursing, Ltd., as tending to economic dependence, and, through a charitable appeal of a committee of actresses, to place trained nurses in an exceedingly dependent and invidious position.

Charity, resulting in economic dependence, is calculated to degrade any body of working women, and cuts at the very root of the principles of their self-support and solidarity in the body politic.

If these great principles are not recognised by the Council and exclusively male executive, which govern the College of Nursing, Ltd., as apparently they are not, then it would appear the management of the College requires drastic reform.

I was requested to ask you to place this letter before the next General Meeting of the League of the Royal Free Hospital Nurses.

I am, yours faithfully,

BEATRICE CUTLER,  
Hon. Secretary.

Miss Isobel Yule, Hon. Sec.,

League of Royal Free Hospital Nurses.

### REPORT FROM THE PRESIDENT.

The President said she had written no formal Report. Owing to the war the activities of the Council had been in abeyance, and it had taken no part in the Nursing Controversy as a whole, as several of its component Societies were actively engaged in guarding and fighting for the true interests of the Nursing Profession, and were supporting, as self-governing organizations, the progressive and just legislation proposed for the profession by the Central Committee. There were now two Bills ready to present to Parliament, and, owing to the isolated action of the College of Nursing, Ltd., we had unfortunately reverted to the lack of unity in which the profession found itself in 1909 before the promoters of the three Bills came into touch, and, with reasonable good sense and expert knowledge, agreed upon one Bill, and harmoniously supported it. There was no doubt that, had the College not thrown the apple of discord into the nursing arena, the Nurses' Registration Bill, supported by English, Scottish, and Irish nurses, and the British Medical Association, would have become law in the last Parliament. The reactionary element which evolved and controlled the College was entirely to blame for depriving the State Registrationists of the fruit of their long years of work for the benefit of the public and the nursing profession—work for which the nurses had paid thousands of pounds out of their own slender remuneration. The College Bill was not a Bill for the State Registration of Trained Nurses, but (1) a Bill to incorporate the College of Nursing and its drastic Constitution; (2) to secure for its own members (and not for the Nursing Profession as a whole) the power to form the First Register to elect the Council which had power to frame the Rules; and (3) to constitute as many Supplementary Registers as this Council chose, to register specialists, and thus depreciate the value

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