

the present Articles of Association (Nos. 6 and 8) which provide that protection.

E. G. F.

GENERAL NURSING COUNCIL FOR SCOTLAND.

NOTES OF BUSINESS DISCUSSED AT MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD 20TH OCTOBER, 1920.

The fortnightly meeting of the General Nursing Council for Scotland was held on 20th inst. The meeting lasted for over three hours.

The bulk of the time was taken up in again going over the Draft Rules as to admission of existing nurses, &c., in the light of a number of suggestions made by the Scottish Board of Health in regard thereto.

It was reported that while the Irish Council was favourable to the proposal to reduce the fee payable by a nurse who wishes to transfer her registration from one part of the Kingdom to another, the English Council had replied that they could not see their way to agree to this and proposed to charge a fee of £1 1s.

The appointment of an Education and Examination Committee was discussed and continued till next meeting.

THE COST OF STATE REGISTRATION.

The suggestion to register nurses for a few pence needs some consideration. The promoters of the first Nurses Registration Bill—people of practical experience—calculated in the year 1904, ten years before the war, that a fee of £2 2s. would cover the cost, and remember in those days a golden sovereign was a kingly coin throughout the world, of the value of twenty silver shillings.

In 1916, the College of Nursing, Ltd., opened a voluntary register, and charged nurses £1 1s. for placing their names upon it.

In 1919, the golden sovereign, or dirty paper Treasury note of £1, had shrunk to the value of about 10s., nevertheless when the cost of State Registration was before Parliament, the College advocates objected to the £2 2s. fee; and Major Barnett, in charge of the Bill, compromised for £1 1s.

Later, a Registration fee not to exceed £1 1s., was inserted in the Government Bill during the two years' period of grace, which at present value is, we believe, about 9s.

Thus the General Nursing Council for England and Wales will have to do its exceedingly costly work, estimated at 42 shillings per head for 9s; and unless it is anxious to figure in *forma pauperis*, it must make a firm stand against any attempt to register Scottish and Irish nurses for a few pence.

Both for financial and professional reasons, £1 1s. should be the minimum, and will be paid, without demur, by nurses who value legal status and the title of "Registered Nurse." To reduce this fee still further would be to depreciate in the estimation both of the nurses and the public the value of State Registration, and bring the whole system into contempt.

Under their new Charter, *bona fide* masseuses have to pay a fee of £3 3s. for the privilege of placing their names on the Massage Register; and the Central Midwives' Board for England, has established the precedent of charging a uniform fee of £1 1s. to all midwives, whether registered under the Midwives' Acts for Scotland and Ireland or not.

Scottish and Irish nurses who desire to improve their position and practice in England are many, and their good work is appreciated south of the Tweed; but English nurses who migrate to Ireland and Scotland are very few. £1 1s., is after all, an infinitesimal fee for the professional advantage gained, and is recognised as such by self-respecting nurses.

THE MASSAGE REGISTER.

We congratulate the Chartered Society of Massage and Medical Gymnastics on assessing the fees for registered membership at a price calculated to meet the expenses of instituting and maintaining the Register, ranging from £2 2s. to £3 3s.

The folly of encouraging people to estimate the benefit of legal status at a few shillings or pence, as the case may be, is most injurious. They should be taught to realise its value, and the power resulting to any body of professional persons from inclusion in a statutory Register—instead, every time this benefit is won for a class of workers, they are urged (usually by the laity) to depreciate its value.

We have not forgotten the fictitious agitation and clamour of the College of Nursing, Ltd., over the reasonable demand in the Central Committee's Bill for a £2 2s. registration fee (after-war value £1 1s.), with the result that the General Nursing Council has now to meet its very considerable expenditure on the latter sum—practically worth in these days about 9s. Let nurses and masseuses be encouraged to value professional and legal status, and be thankful that their work is not subsidised out of the rates as the expenses of the Midwives Board are. When every little tin-pot course of lectures or examination costs from two to ten guineas, and is willingly paid by pupils, why this fuss about registration fees?

We are pleased to note that now Sir Cooper Perry is President of the Chartered Society of Massage, he realises (as presumably he did not do when opposing a £2 2s. fee for nurses), that the latter is the minimum sum on which the Massage Register can be solvently compiled.

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