

## THE GENERAL NURSING COUNCIL.

The 11th meeting of the General Nursing Council for England and Wales was held on Friday, December 10th, at the Ministry of Health, Mr. J. C. Priestley, K.C., in the chair.

### The Registration of Cottage Nurses.

Under the heading of correspondence the chairman reported that a letter had been received from the College of Nursing, Ltd., reporting that at a meeting of the London Centre the proposal for a Supplementary Register of Cottage Nurses (made in Scotland) had been discussed. Those present were of opinion that such a Register was unnecessary and that it would be a danger to the public.

A letter had also been received from the Secretary of the Royal British Nurses' Association enclosing copies of resolutions carried unanimously at a Conference convened by the Association, and held on December 3rd, the third of which was as follows:—

This meeting is of opinion that if the title of "Registered" is bestowed upon Cottage Nurses, as such, both trained nurses and the public will be deprived of the privileges and protection to be effected through the Nurses' Registration Acts.

The other was a strongly worded resolution dealing with the Rules, to which he would refer later.

### Minister's Notes Considered in Camera.

The members of the press then withdrew, and the Council proceeded to consider, *in camera*, the Notes of the Minister of Health on the draft Rules adopted by the General Nursing Council.

### Report of Registration Committee.

MRS. FENWICK (Chairman) moved to receive and adopt a further report from the Registration Committee. She said specimens of Certificates had been received and were under consideration. The design of the Seal, which had been amended, had been submitted and approved. The questions (1) To consider system of Registration to be adopted, and (2) to consider Uniform and Badge had been deferred to a future meeting.

The report was adopted.

### Reply to the Minister of Health re Hours of Employment Bill.

The reply to be sent to the Minister of Health to his letter received by the Council at its meeting on July 30th, transmitting a letter from the Minister of Labour in regard to the provisions of the Hours of Employment Bill as they affected nurses, was further considered. That letter stated that the Minister would be glad if the Council would consider the scheme for a Special Schedule submitted by the College of Nursing (which proposed that the hours of work of all Registered Nurses included in the Bill—the Bill not to apply to Maternity Nurses—should be extended to 56 hours a week, and not exceed 10 hours in the 24 on any one day), and also with reference to the nursing profession in all its branches.

MRS. BEDFORD FENWICK pointed out that in the first Resolution passed by the Council in reference

to the Minister's letter it was decided to recommend that Nurses be taken out of the Bill.

THE CHAIRMAN endorsed this, and added that at the next meeting (that of November 12th) it was resolved, on the motion of Dr. Bedford-Pierce, that the Minister of Health be asked to introduce a Bill to regulate the hours of nurses employed in Hospitals and other Institutions for the care of the sick.

MRS. BEDFORD FENWICK pointed out that if the nurses were taken out of the Minister of Labour's Bill, and the Minister of Health did not bring in a Bill, the nurses would be left out altogether.

MR. CHRISTIAN (Banstead Mental Hospital) said he would like to make it quite clear, in relation to the Association which he represented, that seven-eighths of the nurses strongly objected to be brought under the Minister of Health in this relation. On no consideration would they be satisfied to be under the Minister of Health. Moreover, there was a reservation mentioned by Dr. Bedford-Pierce in relation to a 48-hours' week in attendance on the sick. All mental patients were abnormal, or sub-normal, and whether those in attendance on them were performing strictly nursing services, or playing billiards, cricket, and other games with them, they needed to be on the alert, and such duties should be included in their 48-hours' week.

MISS COX-DAVIES (who had moved the resolution that in any Bill brought in by the Minister of Health the hours should not exceed 48 weekly), said that was precisely why she inserted the words "in attendance on the sick."

MR. CHRISTIAN said that might be the intention, but it should be quite explicit.

THE CHAIRMAN said there was a very strong view in the Council that private nurses did not desire to be restricted to a 48-hours' week.

MISS MACCALLUM hoped the Council would consider this question very seriously. The life of a private nurse was harder than any other, and she had no one to protect her, no one to help her—probably only one in 500 nurses worked on the co-operative system. Private nurses were sweated 24 hours at a time.

MRS. BEDFORD FENWICK said that at a conference of nurses recently held, which considered the subject, the private nurses present who expressed an opinion were unanimous in desiring to be left outside the scope of the Bill, and passed a resolution advocating the exemption of classes of trained nurses who make their own contract for service with the patient.

### Alternative Resolutions.

THE CHAIRMAN then read two alternative resolutions which he had drafted for the consideration of the Council. They were only suggestions, and he should not be offended if neither were adopted.

MRS. BEDFORD FENWICK thought that before adopting either of these resolutions it would be necessary to rescind those already passed in relation to the subject, as they pre-supposed that nurses should remain in the Minister of Labour's Bill.

SIR JENNER VERRALL thought that there should

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