

# Royal British Nurses' Association.

(Incorporated by  Royal Charter.)

**THIS SUPPLEMENT BEING THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE CORPORATION.**

## MEETING OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL.

The first meeting of the General Council, subsequent to the annual meeting, was held on Thursday, 15th inst., at 5.15 p.m. The Hon. Officers were re-elected and the following were elected to fill vacancies on the Executive Committee, subject to their consenting to act:—Medical men: Dr. Belfrage, Dr. Domville, Dr. Courtenay Lord, and Mr. Oppenshaw; Matrons: Misses Breay, Bushby, Steuart Donaldson and Ford; Sisters and Nurses: Mrs. Stewart Murray, Misses Ayres, Bennett and Wise.

The Council had before it, among other business, correspondence with the Ministry of Labour, with which had been forwarded the scheme of the College of Nursing, Ltd., in relation to the Hours of Employment Bill upon which the Ministry had invited observations from the Royal British Nurses' Association. This scheme provides that the maximum working hours for all nurses should average 56 per week, but the Council of the Association decided to adhere to previous recommendations, sent to the Ministry of Labour, to the effect that the maximum working hours per week for all nurses in hospitals and institutions should be forty-eight per week, and that it was not to the best interests of private nurses that there should be restrictive legislation as to their hours of work, as this would tend to militate against the employment by the public of highly-qualified private nurses.

## THE ORGANISATION OF HOME NURSING.

Speaking recently at a meeting at the offices of the Royal British Nurses' Association, at which Miss Cattell was in the chair, Miss H. G. Klaassen urged nurses to give their minds as soon as possible to the organisation of home nursing. She spoke from the consumers' point of view, seeing life through the eyes of a social worker, and from this point of view she saw many signs that there will be a re-organisation of district nursing combined with better provision for the needs of the middle-classes.

With regard to district nursing she could not speak too highly of her appreciation of the work of the Queen Victoria's Jubilee Institute. The voluntary nursing associations had provided

nursing before the working-classes and country people had enough knowledge to realise its value. To-day, largely owing to the war, there is a considerable knowledge of the benefits to be derived from skilled nursing and people are more ready to pay for it. It is also true that there is great difficulty in raising money for carrying on the work of the voluntary associations. The cost has increased, while, from the same causes, the subscribers can less well afford their subscriptions.

Many voluntary associations which used to give free nursing are beginning to make charges.

The rich get good nursing in their own homes, and the poor get excellent nursing in institutions where they act as clinical material for the education of doctors and nurses. The middle-classes cannot afford the charges of the whole-time resident nurse, which are now very high, and justly so.

People have a good deal of commonsense and prefer to spend limited means on food and fresh-air and all that keeps them well before they put aside money for problematic illness. Unless skilled nursing is really within their means they will get on as well as they can without.

For all these reasons it is urgently needed that an effort should be made to organise nursing in such a way that it works out economically.

The methods of the "Queen's Nurses" are extremely efficient and economical and are worthy of the attention of those nurses who nurse paying patients. Private visiting nurses are to be found in many towns, but there is need of organisation before visiting nurses can be entirely successful in supplying the needs of a town.

The report of the Consultative Council on Medical and Allied Services is extremely interesting in connection with this subject. The need for organisation in the interest of the middle-classes is recognised. At present the public are not getting at all full advantage of the scientific discoveries of the last epoch.

The Council propose that a Special Committee should consider the subject of nursing services. Now is the time when thought given to the subject of the organisation of home nursing will bear fruit.

If nurses fail to take interest in the matter they will be organised by the doctors and consumers, and have little voice in their own affairs.

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