

CONFERENCE ON NURSING EDUCATION.

CONVENED BY THE GENERAL NURSING COUNCIL FOR ENGLAND AND WALES.

The Conference on Nursing Education convened by the General Nursing Council for England and Wales, and held by permission of the Royal Society of Medicine at No. 1, Wimpole Street, W., on April 28th, was a most successful gathering, and demonstrated the great interest aroused in the work of the Council. The Matrons and Superintendents of Nursing Schools, and Teachers of Nursing, evidently appreciated the action of the Council in consulting them before the Syllabus of Lectures and Demonstrations, and Training in General Nursing, drafted by the Education and Examination Committee assumed its final form, and showed a genuine desire to help the Council in the elucidation of the problems which confront it, which augurs well for the success of its work.

The Conference was divided into Morning and Afternoon Sessions, the subject discussed in the morning being the General Register and in the afternoon the Supplementary Parts of the Register in conjunction with Alternative and Reciprocal Training.

MORNING SESSION.

The Chairman of the Council, Mr. J. C. Priestley, K.C., presided, and was supported on the platform by the majority of the members of the Council. He opened the meeting by saying that he had never been so pleased at being Chairman of the General Nursing Council as he was that day, when he saw gathered in the Hall so many women who were devoting their lives to nursing education, and whom the Council had asked to come and give their views, and their views alone, to enable the ladies forming the Educational Committee to draw up the Syllabus for the general curriculum of training for Nurses.

It would not be unbecoming of him to remind those present that the Council was there under Statute. The Nursing Acts were passed in December, 1919, and the General Nursing Council for England and Wales appointed in May, 1920. Since that time they had given their whole-hearted attention to their duty. Some of those present perhaps wondered why the Register was not yet open, but the delay had been in the best interests of the nurses. They had also had to consider the interests of the Sister Councils of Scotland and Ireland. Things were now so smoothed out that he hoped they would be able to open the Register very soon. In the meantime they had been considering the Syllabus of Lectures and Demonstrations, and Training in General Nursing, and he would ask Miss Lloyd Still, Chairman of the Education Committee to present a paper on this subject. She would be followed by Miss Dowbiggin and Dr. Goodall, and then those who desired to speak would be invited to send up their names, and he would call upon them in order to come upon the platform. There would be no

resolutions, as the meeting was called for conference, but criticisms were freely invited so that the Council might know how to conduct their business in the best interests of the Nursing Profession.

THE DRAFT SYLLABUS.

By MISS A. LLOYD STILL, C.B.E., R.R.C.

Chairman of the Education and Examination Committee.

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES,—The Chairman has introduced the discussion, and I have been asked to speak on the Syllabus before us, and on the subsequent examinations.

When the Bill for the State Registration of Nurses became law, the Ministry of Health nominated the General Nursing Council, whose business it will be to set a uniform standard of education in Nurse-Training Schools, and to formulate rules and regulations for the examinations that must necessarily be passed by the future nurse who desires to be placed on the Register.

We welcome this opportunity of co-ordinating our systems of training. In the past, each Training School has been a law unto itself—a condition which has resulted in a parochial interest and a widely varying standard. In the national interests, we must now work hand in hand and present a united front as a fully organised body with a definite system of teaching and training—a system that shall not be behind in realizing that the mind as well as the heart and hand must equally be developed in order to evolve the best type of nurse, and yet one that avoids the pitfalls of a too theoretical or a too stereotyped training that makes, on the one hand, a clinical assistant and, on the other, an efficient machine at the expense of the vitalising spirit.

It is the desire of the General Nursing Council to put before the Nursing Body of England and Wales a syllabus that will help forward this unifying process, and will give to the training schools some definite material on which all may equally work, some perhaps only in briefest outline at the start, others with fuller detail according to the educational standard of the nurse in training.

The Aim of the Syllabus.

The general aim should be to stimulate and foster the nurse's powers of development; to increase her capacity by a more extensive knowledge of subjects—scientific, social, practical—pertaining to her profession; to train her mind to a wider outlook than that usually obtained within the four walls of an institution, bringing into line with the curative measures the no less important branches of preventive work—those branches securing the Nation's health and well-being through its mothers, its infant and child life, its racial inheritance, its economics and social state; so that a nurse at the conclusion of her general training may, with knowledge and some preparation make a free choice of her work in life, and develop along any one of these allied branches. We realize that the finest, most fruitful work is

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)