

### "A LEARNED PROFESSION."

Mr. Charles Lupton (Hon. Treasurer) presided at the annual prize distribution to the nursing staff of the Leeds General Infirmary, on January 21st, at the opening of the new Session, and announced that a Preliminary School had recently been established, in which probationers would receive three months' training before entering the wards for final acceptance.

He indicated the great development which had taken place in the institution in the last seventy years, particularly as a training school for nurses, so that nursing might now be termed a learned profession, and stated that in addition to developing their own training school they had asked the University of Leeds to establish a diploma in nursing. He was very sanguine that the University would adopt the proposal, in which case they would be the first University in the country to do so.

The selected speaker was Sir Berkeley Moynihan who, in addressing the nursing staff, said that when they left the hospital to go out into the world to practise their profession, they would require all the gifts, all the tact, and all the accomplishments that their natural aptitude, and their long training had conferred upon them.

Among the qualifications through which they were to fit themselves to become competent to undertake, with highest success, the manifold and arduous responsibilities ahead of them, he placed first the acquisition of knowledge. But knowledge would avail them little unless it led them along the way to wisdom, which implied the timely and rightful application of knowledge. To gain wisdom was of all tasks in life the most difficult. They would be foiled, rebuffed and disheartened not once, but many times, as they toiled earnestly after it. In describing the Nurse's office, he set a high ideal before them. But when he proceeded to say that "until some system of supervision of the training of all who may call themselves nurses, and of the registration and qualification by diploma or degree is introduced, the nursing profession will not be cleansed from those impurities which still, unhappily, attach to it," he appeared to have overlooked the fact that—mainly through the work of the Central Committee for the State Registration of Nurses, and its affiliated societies—Acts have been passed in the three kingdoms establishing statutory bodies, *i.e.*, General Nursing Councils, empowered to define nursing standards and register nurses, and conferring legal status upon Registered Nurses.

The nurses of the General Infirmary, Leeds, are indebted to Sir Berkeley Moynihan for his desire to bring academic honours within their reach. We hope that they may attain them in the future.

The Education and Examination Committee of the General Nursing Council is now at work upon the curriculum of Nursing Education, and

when this has been adopted by the training schools and the foundations have thus been well and truly laid, we look forward to seeing a super-structure built upon it which will raise Nursing to the foremost place in professions for women.

### THE GENERAL NURSING COUNCIL AN INDEPENDENT STATUTORY BODY.

A very misleading statement has been widely circulated from which it is inferred that the General Nursing Council for England and Wales is supporting the ill-advised suggestion of a 56-hours' working week for nurses, through legislation, and also has made a series of recommendations to the Minister of Health *re* nurses' pay. The fact is that the Council disapproved and voted against the College scheme for a 56-hour week, and recommended 48 hours. The Council has never considered the salaries of nurses or made any recommendations to the Minister of Health in this connection, although no doubt it is entirely in sympathy with adequate remuneration for members of the Nursing Profession. To state, as the *Glasgow Herald* does, that "Working in conjunction with the College of Nursing, the General Nursing Council has also decided that nurses shall be included in a special scheme," is not a fact. The Council acts on its own responsibility, and not in "conjunction" either with the College or any other Nurses' Organisation.

### NURSES INDIGNANT.

The adverse Report of Miss Wamsley, an Inspector under the Ministry of Health, concerning the Islington Infirmary, Highgate, to which we referred in our last issue, has been met with a total denial of the allegations and an indignant protest on the part of the nursing staff, voiced by a deputa-tion of nurses, representing a staff of over 100, who attended a meeting of the Guardians last week with this object.

Miss Wamsley alleged, in her report to the Ministry of Health, that the nursing in some of the wards was unsatisfactory, and supported the idea that many of the nurses think of little else but off duty time and money, that in two wards where the patients were nursed by women the conditions were better than in the male nurses' ward, but she found two sore backs were unreported, and unprotected by water pillows, and there was evidence of carelessness and want of attention to the beds after dinner.

The Board has decided to investigate the allegations, and, further, authorised the Chairman (Councillor W. B. Parker) to issue a denial on behalf of the Board and the staff.

It would appear that the Board is not in a judicial frame of mind to already prejudge the case.

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