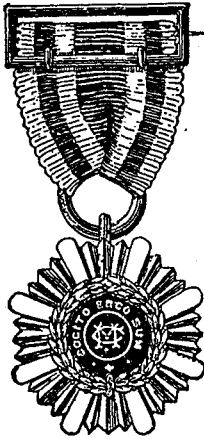


## THE MATRONS' COUNCIL OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.



The Annual Meeting of the Matrons' Council of Great Britain and Ireland was held on the invitation of Miss S. M. Marsters, by the kind permission of the Committee of the Paddington and Marylebone District Nursing Association, at 117, Sutherland Avenue, on Saturday, January 29th at 3 p.m. The President, Miss Mildred Heather Bigg, R.R.C., was in the chair, and in the absence of Miss A. E. Hulme, Hon. Secretary, her duties were undertaken by Miss Beatrice Cutler.

The minutes of the previous meeting having been read and confirmed,

Applications for membership were next considered and action taken thereon.

The correspondence included a number of letters from members regretting their inability to be present.

### RE-ELECTION OF HON. OFFICERS.

Miss A. M. Bushby (Matron, Queen's Hospital, Hackney Road), Miss M. Lord (late Matron, Banstead Mental Hospital), and Miss A. Dowbiggin, C.B.E., R.R.C. (Matron, North Middlesex Hospital), whose three years' term of office as Vice-Presidents had come to an end, were unanimously re-elected.

Miss A. E. Hulme, Hon. Secretary, and Miss S. A. Villiers, Hon. Treasurer, were also unanimously re-elected, and the members cordially endorsed the proposition of the President that the meeting should, in addition, express its gratitude, for their services to the Council, which entailed a considerable amount of work.

### REPORT OF DELEGATE TO THE ANNUAL MEETING, NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN.

Miss Marsters, who, with Miss Terry (Bath) and Miss Kennedy (Clifton), had been appointed a delegate of the Council to the Annual Meeting of the National Council of Women at Bristol, in October, presented an interesting report on the meeting. The resolutions passed had covered a diversity of subjects including Proportional Representation (on which a resolution had been carried calling on the Government to adopt proportional representation both for Parliamentary and Municipal Elections), Illegitimate Children, Widows' Pensions, Women in Civil Service, Child Adoption, Guardianship of Infants, and the League of Nations.

In each instance she had voted as instructed by the Council. She had not, on account of the expense involved, voted on the resolution recom-

mending the adoption of a scheme for widows' pensions, on which there was a great diversity of opinion, though the resolution was ultimately carried.

It was agreed that the views expressed in many of the resolutions were admirable, but the doubt was expressed whether there was sufficient driving force behind them to carry them into effect.

Before the business meeting concluded the President asked Miss Marsters to convey to the Committee of the Paddington and Marylebone District Nursing Association the thanks of the Matrons' Council for their kindness in inviting the Council to meet in their charming Home. She thought it an excellent thing that the Hospital Matrons present should learn, at first hand, something of the work of district nurses. She then invited Miss Marsters to address the members on

### DISTRICT NURSING AND SOCIAL WELFARE.

Miss Marsters prefaced her address by saying that District Nursing, like the Scout Movement, demanded endurance, unselfishness and kindly action, and also tactfulness in imparting knowledge to the poor in their own homes.

She then said:

"In considering the position of the District Nurse of to-day we must acknowledge the fact that she is a great power and asset to be utilized in the scheme of the Ministry of Health for dealing with the problem of the Health of the Nation, she has for many years been in the field, long before lady sanitary inspectors, health visitors, infant life protection visitors, &c., were even dreamed of; she has been the pioneer of the health work of the nation, and it is most interesting to note the gradual developments which have taken place year by year since the early sixties."

Miss Marsters then traced the development of the work of District Nurses from its commencement in Liverpool in 1859, the establishment by Queen Victoria of the Queen Victoria Jubilee Institute in 1887 down to the present time, when the right to be a Queen's Nurse, and to wear the pendant and brassard denoting this, is granted only to nurses who have had a thorough hospital training, and have passed an examination after special training in district nursing. Their work is further subject to frequent inspection by highly trained Queen's Superintendents and Inspectors.

Miss Marsters herself came to London to be trained in district work in 1896, and said "The conditions under which the people lived in 1896 cannot be compared with the conditions of the present day, in spite of the shortage of houses. The housing was deplorable, and no one seemed to think anything of it; it was good enough for poor people. Wages were low, but food was cheap, also rents, but there was no accommodation for washing or cooking, no gas stoves, or penny-in-the-slot meters. Also transit was slow—only horse buses and trams. Men walked to their work, and

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