

desirable that he should attend the Conference personally, but that the Council was always open to receive a deputation.

He then made a statement concerning the salaries of probationers, and their standardisation, the first item on the Agenda for consideration. As this was subsequently deferred to an adjourned Conference we shall print these remarks next week.

The Chairman then said that the President of the Poor-Law Unions' Association was now present and he moved that he should take the chair. This was agreed, and the chair was then taken by the Rev. P. S. G. Propert, M.A.

The Circular Letter.

It was agreed that, as the matter of principal interest was the Circular Letter from the Registrar of the General Nursing Council, which was item 5 on the Agenda, this should be considered first.

MR. TOM PERCIVAL said that there was a wide diversity of opinion as to the Draft Syllabus issued by the General Nursing Council. Poor-Law Guardians had already endeavoured to attain some uniformity of standard. The object of the present Schedule was to wipe out the distinction between nurses in general, and poor-law hospitals in regard to training and examination.

The Poor-Law met with special difficulties of its own, these being lack of candidates, lack of trained teachers, and the low standard of education of the candidates who were coming forward.

He understood privately from the Registrar of the General Nursing Council that quite a number of Poor-Law Authorities had accepted the Syllabus. He thought the first criticism met with was that it had aimed too high. They must remember, however, that a similar Syllabus was already in operation in some Poor-Law Training Schools, and that they did not find it too difficult. It looked terrible, but it was not so terrible as it looked. He drew attention to the Explanatory Note printed with the Syllabus which indicated that the semi-scientific subjects referred to would be dealt with only in an elementary form.

They might appoint a Deputation to wait on the General Nursing Council as its Chairman had suggested, and ask it to consider in place of a Syllabus of Training a Syllabus of Examination. Such things as requiring a knowledge of the Metric System might be deferred, and, in conjunction with Poor-Law Hospitals, it was a question whether Preliminary Training Schools were necessary, whether experience in Poor-Law wards did not obviate the need for them.

MR. R. A. LEACH (Rochdale) pointed out that the Syllabus was a draft one. His own Board had said it would accept it when it had been adopted in its final form; but both the Board and its Medical Officer considered it too stiff. He enquired how many Boards had said they would accept the Curriculum when finally adopted.

One clerk of a major Training School had said that if the Curriculum were enforced he would

advise his Board to close down the Nurse Training School and nurse the patients with trained nurses.

MR. TOM PERCIVAL regretted he could not reply to the question, but said if the Poor-Law Hospitals were nursed exclusively by trained nurses the supply of such nurses would be cut off. Certain amendments had been recommended to the General Nursing Council.

A Delegate asked for the *personnel* of the body dictating this Curriculum. Mr. Percival pointed out that the General Nursing Council was a statutory body, with power over the training of nurses, and would control the Register of Nurses.

Another Delegate said they had heard from the Secretary that the Syllabus was not definitely settled. He thought they should interview the Council, but from what he heard he thought it would take some power to convince them. He approved of the suggestion made by Mr. Percival, that a Committee should be appointed to confer with this august body.

This was supported by other Delegates who hoped the result of such a conference would be that they would have a Syllabus which they would take a pleasure in working.

It was not quite the correct thing that the managers had been ignored in the way they had.

MR. MELLISH (Cardiff) agreed that the Curriculum was too hard for ordinary probationers.

MISS JAMES, Bethnal Green, said the Syllabus for the first year was exceedingly difficult. It was not the London Matriculation. Only one girl in a hundred gave herself to serious education until she entered a profession. Again, the eight hours' day very much lessened the amount of training given. It was urged that probationers were not so tired and were able to give more attention to the instruction received when they were on duty, but it was a painful fact that the girl going in for nursing was visited by the same microbes as others, and could not work so hard as her predecessors. This, at any rate, applied to girls who had been in air-raids and had been ricketed and racketed by visitors from above. The first year's Curriculum was certainly too difficult. On the other hand, if they stood out they would not get probationers.

Mrs. ROBERTS (West Derby) upheld the Curriculum, and said she had attended the Conference convened by the General Nursing Council on the subject and very few difficulties were brought forward.

THE DELEGATE FROM LAMBETH thought the first speaker had struck the right note. Poor-Law nurses were regarded as maintaining a lower standard and level than nurses in voluntary hospitals. When the Syllabus was put before him he recognised that here was an opportunity for their Poor-Law nurses to come out at the end of three or four years' training with a similar certificate to the best. If a Committee were appointed, he hoped it would not be with the main object of making the service easier than that accepted by the best hospitals.

The opinion was further expressed that there

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