

NURSING ECHOES.

The Council of Queen Victoria's Jubilee Institute for Nurses met recently at 58, Victoria Street. Sir Harold Boulton presided.

Sir Harold Boulton was re-elected chairman. The executive committee for the current year was also elected.

The report to be submitted to the patron, Queen Alexandra, was approved. It was reported that arrangements have been made with certain of the approved societies, under the National Health Insurance Act, by which the societies make payment for the nursing of their members. Efforts are still being made to exempt the nurses from the provisions of the Unemployment Insurance Act, and 36,000 nurses who desire exemption have signed a statement to that effect. The names of 317 nurses have been placed on the Roll of Queen's Nurses during 1921, and the supply of applicants for training as Queen's Nurses is most satisfactory. Sufficient funds were raised last year to carry on the work of the Institute during that year and the early part of 1922, but the expenditure of the Institute is largely in excess of the normal income, and cannot be further reduced without impairing the efficiency and scope of the work.

The people of Manchester and Salford have founded a Million Shilling Fund for the nursing of the sick poor of these cities to commemorate the marriage of Princess Mary.

We are always glad to note the employment of well-trained nurses to care for the sick poor. At a meeting recently held at Higham Ferrers, at which the Mayor presided, it was arranged, on his worship's suggestion, after an earnest and eloquent address by Miss C. A. Lee, Superintendent of the Northants District Nursing Association, "that a Town Nursing Association be formed, and that they have the best nurse that Miss Lee could find them."

Miss Lee urged the value of a fully trained nurse in maternity and general cases, and said a trained nurse was an economical factor in any town. Half the cases in the women's hospital to-day were the result of bad midwifery yesterday. If they had an association they had got to pay for it, for it could not be run cheaply nowadays. The Ministry of Health would give them help, and the Board of Guardians would help to pay for the nursing of the poor. The townspeople must give their support as regularly as clockwork. She did not think they could do with anything less than a Queen's

nurse, who was also a certified midwife, who would cost them about £200 a year.

A correspondent of the *Guardian* wishes to know what guarantee a would-be nurse has that she will not be turned down at the end of two or three years' probation, and debarred from qualifying because of summary dismissal by reason of some personal disagreement between her and the Matron or Sister-in-Charge? We are of opinion that a probationer's suitability or otherwise for nursing can well be tested during the first year of her service; also, that summary dismissal by a Matron should not be permitted. Her powers should be limited to suspension and report, and the Committee with whom the nurse's engagement is made should retain the power of dismissal in its own hands.

Yet another phase of the Norwich Workhouse Infirmary tragedy has now been entered upon. Dr. Barclay, the Medical Officer in charge of the poor man who died shortly after an operation, expressed the opinion at the inquest that the cause of death was not shock, but probably loss of cardiac control. He considered the patient should not have been left for an hour and a half after the operation, but said that this attendance was impossible owing to the inadequate number of nurses, with which opinion the Coroner agreed.

The House Committee have now drawn up, and presented to the Board of Guardians, a Report on the matter. They express themselves satisfied that the nursing staff is sufficient. (There were one Sister and two probationers to 124 patients.) They censured the Sister for leaving the patient within an hour of the operation, and recommended the Board to suspend Dr. Barclay immediately for the unexpired term of his service, and to rescind the resolution of December 21st, 1921, allowing him six weeks' leave with full pay, and a grant of £50 towards removal expenses. Dr. Barclay has resigned his appointment, at the request of the Board. The Committee in their report expressed the opinion that his statements as to the shortage of nurses were prompted by a desire to discredit the Guardians' administration of the infirmary before leaving their service.

We hope that for the protection of patients and of the medical and nursing staffs the Minister of Health will hold an inquiry into the administration of the Norwich Infirmary, and compel the Guardians to do their duty towards the sick for whom they are responsible.

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