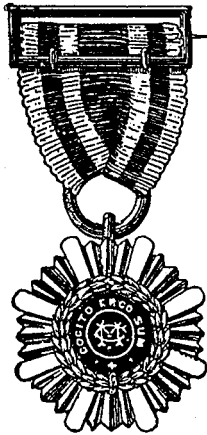


THE MATRONS' COUNCIL OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.



The Annual Meeting of the Matrons' Council of Great Britain and Ireland was held, on the invitation of the Matron, Miss Kathleen A. Smith, R.R.C., and by the kind permission of the Board of Management, on February 25th, at the London Temperance Hospital, Hampstead Road, N. Prior to the meeting the members present were conducted by the Matron and Sisters round the wards, (bright with spring flowers and gay chintz screens) and other departments of the

hospital, where the well-cared-for patients appeared very happy in spite of their ailments.

In the unavoidable absence of the President, Miss M. Heather-Bigg, R.R.C., the chair was taken by the Hon. Treasurer, Miss S. A. Villiers, and Miss G. Lord acted as Hon. Secretary in the absence of Miss A. E. Hulme. There was a very good attendance of members, and many more wrote expressing their regret at their inability to be present.

Miss Steuart Donaldson, R.R.C., Matron of the Royal Infirmary, Glasgow, wrote, in addition: "I cannot refrain from expressing my deep thankfulness and satisfaction and relief that the effort to deprive Nurses of the record of their certificates has failed in England, and I trust that ere long the Minister of Health will sign the amended rule."

Arising out of the minutes, Miss Lord reported that at the last meeting of the Matrons' Council, on the invitation of Lord Robert Cecil, the President (Miss M. Heather-Bigg), Miss Anderson Parsons, and herself had been appointed to represent it at a demonstration organised by the League of Nations on Armistice Night at the Central Hall, Westminster, on the reduction of Armaments. The meeting was a great success. Miss Anderson Parsons also testified not only to the success but to the unanimity of the meeting.

The next item on the Agenda was "Applications and Resignations," which were then dealt with.

The Hon. Secretary and Hon. Treasurer then presented their Reports, the latter showing a small balance in hand. Miss Villiers commented on the specially heavy expenditure in printing and stationery necessary during the past year. The adoption of the reports was moved and agreed.

The Hon. Officers, Miss M. Heather-Bigg, R.R.C., President, Miss S. A. Villiers, Hon. Treasurer, and Miss A. E. Hulme, Hon. Secretary, were then re-elected for another term of office, and Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, Miss Huxley, Miss Waind and Miss Annie Smith, subject to

their consent to act, were re-elected as Vice-Presidents.

The chair was then taken by Miss Kathleen A. Smith, who called on Miss Helen Pearse to move a Resolution.

RESOLUTION I.

Miss Pearse moved:—

That the Matrons' Council of Great Britain and Ireland, in Annual Meeting assembled, begs to record its strong disapprobation of the conduct of those members of the General Nursing Council for England and Wales who proposed to deprive trained nurses of the record of their certificates of proficiency on the State Register, and respectfully petitions the Minister of Health to sign the amended First Schedule of the Rules, which provides for justice to certificated nurses in this particular.

Miss Pearse said that it gave her much pleasure to move this Resolution. It had staggered her when she first heard of the proposition that certificates should not be recorded. Most of those present were certificated many years ago, and held important positions in the Nursing Profession. They might not really be injured by the proposal, but that was not the case with a large number of nurses, who would be placed in a position of serious disability and economic difficulty of great magnitude if they had to compete with nurses who in a few years' time would hold the State Certificate after passing an examination held under its authority. Public authorities, in making appointments, would inevitably rely upon the Register, and if they found upon it nurses holding the State Certificate, and others of a more or less indefinite status, they would be apt to give preference to those holding the State Certificate after its examination. It was true they could refer to the hospital where a nurse was trained and inquire whether or not she held its certificate, but in many cases they would not take the trouble to do this; it would, therefore, be a gross injustice not to record on the State Register the certificates of proficiency held by nurses who completed their training before the State examination was established. All present knew of the trouble there had recently been in the General Nursing Council for England and Wales, and how much they owed to their champion, Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, for the way in which she had stood out against and opposed this proposal. (Applause.) She believed that the reasons it had been made were mainly sentimental, but sentiment should not enter into such a question as this. Had the nurses not had good champions on the General Nursing Council they would have known nothing of this proposal until it had been carried out. She understood that the opposition in the Council had now been withdrawn, and she had pleasure in proposing that the Matrons' Council should ask the Minister of Health to sign the amended Schedule, providing for the record of Certificates. She hoped there would be a strong vote upon it.

The Resolution was seconded by Miss Marquardt, and carried by acclamation.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)