

THE GENERAL NURSING COUNCIL FOR ENGLAND AND WALES.

The twenty-fifth meeting of the General Nursing Council for England and Wales was held at the Ministry of Health, Whitehall, on Friday, June 16th, Sir Wilmot P. Herringham, K.C.M.G., C.B., F.R.C.P., M.D., Chairman of the Council, presiding.

Before the meeting opened, the Chairman said that proofs of the Voting Paper for Nurse-members of the Council at the forthcoming election would be sent to members of the Council, and asked for suggestions and emendations to be sent to the office in time to be considered by the Registration Committee on Friday, 23rd inst.

Minutes.

MRS. BEDFORD FENWICK asked why the Resolution which was on the Agenda, proposed by her and discussed, had been omitted from the minutes? She asked that it should be inserted in the minutes, and this was agreed.

Correspondence.

A letter from the Colonial Office, on behalf of Mr. Secretary Churchill, informed the Council that the Governments of British Guiana, Jamaica and Trinidad had been asked to consider nursing legislation. Mr. Churchill considered that no useful purpose would be served by communicating with other Crown Colonies. In regard to Fiji, which had been specially mentioned, Mr. Churchill was of opinion that if the trained nurses there were dissatisfied with present conditions they should bring the matter before the Colonial Government.

THE CHAIRMAN then read a letter from Miss Herbert, 8, Porchester Square, W., drawing attention to the position of Existing Nurses under the Nurses' Registration Act, 1919, and expressing the opinion that it was obvious that the Minister of Health and Parliament never contemplated the restrictions imposed by the present Rules. Under Section 9, Clause (f) of the Rules, a Superintendent Nurse under the Poor Law was recognised as eligible, her professional status sufficed, but that applied only to the Poor Law; and amongst civilian nurses, one who had trained pupils who were eligible for registration, might herself be ineligible. There were also a good number of general nurses whose training did not conform to Rule 9 (1), but was higher than required by 9 (a) and (b).

Though the Minister of Health had signed the Rules, the writer enquired whether the Council had not thought any revision necessary to enable them to deal with applications on their individual merits.

MRS. FENWICK enquired whether the writer of the letter was in the office of the College of Nursing and Miss Cox-Davies said not at the present time.

THE CHAIRMAN proposed that the letter should be referred to the Registration Committee, and

that they be asked to consider whether the Council should ask for power to consider individual cases on their merits, and cognate questions. Anomalies did exist, and a case was to be brought up in Parliament.

MISS MACCALLUM said that, having induced several nurses to register with some difficulty on the assurance that at least one year's general training was required, she thought it would be unfair to them if a lower standard were accepted.

SIR JENNER VERRALL understood that the lady claimed that the Council had not been so liberal as it should have been.

MRS. BEDFORD FENWICK said that the Council was required to satisfy itself that the persons registered had "adequate knowledge and experience of the nursing of the sick." When it framed the Rules it considered that a year's training in a General Hospital or Poor Law Infirmary was the minimum which should be required.

DR. BEDFORD PIERCE proposed, and SIR JENNER VERRALL seconded, that the Registration Committee should have power to take a legal opinion.

MRS. BEDFORD FENWICK said that the Rules commended themselves to the Minister of Health who drafted the Act, and they had been signed, and laid before Parliament.

It was agreed that the Council authorise the Registration Committee to obtain a legal opinion.

THE CHAIRMAN further referred to the letter of a nurse, who enquired why she had not received her registration certificate, and said that her name had been passed a month ago but they were not able to keep the Register abreast with the passed list. He saw no reason why the names should not be published, or a postcard sent to applicants whose names the Council decided to place on the Register.

MRS. BEDFORD FENWICK proposed that the postcard should be issued. The Act was passed for the Registration of Nurses, and she considered the expense entailed justifiable. It would allay dissatisfaction, and set the minds of the nurses at rest.

SIR JENNER VERRALL seconded the proposal. It was agreed that this course should be adopted.

Report of the Mental Nursing Committee.

DR. BEDFORD PIERCE then moved that his Report be received. He reported:—

The Committee has met once—on June 7th.

1. To report that arrangements have been made for a joint conference between the Education and Examination Committee and the Mental Nursing Committee with members of the Committee on Mental Nursing appointed by the Board of Control. This conference will be held on July 12th, at 2.30 p.m., at the Offices of the Council.

2. To recommend the adoption of the Syllabus on Mental Nursing which was circulated on April 13th to all members of the Council, with the corrections:—

DR. BEDFORD PIERCE drew the attention of the Council to the fact that in moving that the

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