

Discussion.

Mrs. EUSTACE HILLS said that the appointment of a Secretary to the Registrar was suggested to meet the needs of the present time. Miss Darbyshire had already given valuable voluntary help in the office, and had had wide administrative experience. The Committee thought it essential that the Registrar should be given a Secretary to carry out the business of the present Council.

Mrs. BEDFORD FENWICK opposed the appointment on several grounds. The Finance Committee, whose Report would be considered later, had considered the proposal and withheld its approval. The Council ought not to appoint any more highly paid officials when they were already paying £60 a week for clerical work and had a staff of 18 in the office. Moreover, she considered it quite unnecessary, when they had appointed to help the Registrar an Assistant Registrar, a Registration clerk, and a skilled stenographer who attended all meetings, took notes of the proceedings, and really acted as Secretary, though this was the Registrar's duty, as Rule 35 provided that the Registrar should act as Secretary of the Council.

The lady recommended by the General Purposes Committee to fill a post which had not yet been sanctioned by the Council was not trained in secretarial work. She was a very close personal friend of the Registrar, and was a middle-aged woman who had been invalided out of Lady Minto's Indian Nursing Association and recently had suffered two serious operations. If the Council did decide to create this post, she considered the appointment should be thrown open, and advertised, according to precedent in appointing to vacancies for the senior posts filled by nurses; also that they should appoint someone possessing youth, good health, and who had had expert secretarial training. It was only at the May meeting of the Council they had agreed that applicants for official posts should produce a medical certificate of health, and had given consent for four more clerical workers to be engaged. Moreover, the nurses who had been compelled to expend upwards of £30,000 in securing Registration, would have a very serious grievance if a lady were appointed to this position who had consistently opposed and signed manifestoes against State Registration.

Mrs. FENWICK reminded the Council that the Chairman of the Finance Committee had said the system of inspection of original certificates was too costly, and ostensibly to save money nurses were registered on second hand information, since which time the expenses of administration had gone up by leaps and bounds.

The Council still owed the Treasury, through the Ministry of Health, £5,000—an obligation they had twice recently been asked to discharge.

Miss SEYMOUR YAPP supported the suggestion that another paid official should be appointed and hold the position of Registrar's Secretary.

Miss MACDONALD asked the Chairman of the General Purposes Committee whether Miss Darbyshire had had any secretarial training.

Miss VILLIERS expressed the opinion that the post should be advertised.

Miss DOWBIGGIN thought that was necessary. She further enquired whether the lady appointed would be subordinate to the Assistant Registrar. (Hear, hear.)

Dr. GOODALL said he understood the appointment would be made, at present, as a temporary measure, and that the question of making it permanent would be left to the decision of the new Council which would come into office in January, he did not think it was necessary to advertise the post if this point was made clear to the lady.

Miss COX DAVIES said she had not seen Miss Darbyshire for years until she was recently interviewed by the General Purposes Committee,* but she knew that she had had to deal with a variety of work, and it did appear that she could give valuable help. As to Miss Darbyshire having signed against State Registration she considered this unimportant.

Rev. G. B. CRONSHAW was in favour of giving this necessary help to the end of the year.

Miss MACCALLUM asked what work Miss Darbyshire had been doing in the office? On the question of the health of the candidate, Miss MACCALLUM said that when she had formerly appealed for consideration for disabled Army nurses for such posts her request had been turned down on the ground of the great importance of good health.

Mrs. EUSTACE HILLS replied that Miss Darbyshire had been helping the Registrar. There was no question of her being above Miss Parsloe, the Assistant Registrar. The matter was urgent.

Mrs. FENWICK asked if the appointment was so urgent, why was Miss Darbyshire not coming till the 1st of September? but received no reply.

Miss MACDONALD repeated her question which had been ignored by Mrs. Eustace Hills, "Had Miss Darbyshire had any training as a Secretary?"

In reply she elicited a hesitating and grudging reply, "Well then, No."

On Recommendation I (a) of the Report of the General Purposes Committee being put to the meeting, 12 voted for it and 4 against it.

Recommendation (b) was carried with the omission of the name of Miss Stear, who, Mrs. Eustace Hills said, was unable to continue her work for the Council, but she thought she knew someone else for the post.

The Recommendations of Clause II were also agreed.

On Clause III Mrs. BEDFORD FENWICK said the Council were aware that the Housekeeper (Miss Cameron) had sent in her resignation, but was it a fact that the Assistant Housekeeper (Miss Fenn) had been told to send in hers, and, if so, who authorised the Registrar to ask for it, and why was this not reported to the Council at its last meeting? She considered that the Council should retain in its own hands the appointment

* Who authorised the General Purposes Committee to interview a candidate for the post before it had been approved by the Council?

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