

Register. I have no power to give any direction as to the return of any fees.

Remarks.—In our opinion there was no reason—considering the enormous clerical staff employed by the General Nursing Council—why the First Register, which only contains about 7,000 names, should have been held up for eight months, or issued in March, 1923, instead of in July, 1922; and having postponed its publication so long it would have saved the nurses at least £700 if the names registered from July to December, 1922, had been looped into the proof sheets and one issue of the Register for 1922 published. This economy would, of course, not appeal to our lavish administrators!

Mr. Chamberlain, we believe, has not been fully informed as to G.N.C. methods *re* the retention fee. As the Register did not appear in 1922, naturally nurses resented having to pay for the retention of their names upon it. Be this as it may, many nurses who had already paid were bombarded by the Registrar for this fee a second time—and apologies for mistakes in this connection tardily offered to them when they objected to paying twice. The truth is that drastic reorganization of the work at Headquarters is absolutely necessary if further dissatisfaction is to be avoided; and with absolute power in the hands of the Registrar and her little ring of partisan supporters (some of whom apparently are not averse to a *quid pro quo*), we fear there is little hope of reform under existing circumstances.

NEPOTISM IN THE GENERAL NURSING COUNCIL.

Having been elected Chairman of the General Purposes Committee upon the proposal of Miss Cox-Davies, the Hon. Mrs. Eustace Hills sent up a recommendation to the General Nursing Council on July 21st, 1922, that a new office "urgently necessary" (that of Secretary to the Registrar) should be created, with a salary at the rate of £250 per annum, although a highly-skilled stenographer was already available and employed for that purpose, and the name of Miss Ruth Darbyshire—a close personal friend of the Registrar's—was put forward as qualified for the post. Mrs. Eustace Hills was invited to inform the Council what training and experience this lady possessed for a well-paid secretarial post, and she was compelled to acknowledge, and did it with a very ill-grace, that Miss Darbyshire's experience was nil! In spite of the fact that this "urgent" work could not be undertaken by Miss Darbyshire for another six weeks, she was, of course, approved by the majority of the Council.

On the first of September, Miss Darbyshire entered upon her "secretarial" duties, which apparently resolved themselves into sitting in state in the Assistant Registrar's Office to interview candidates, who called about filling in papers and other trivial matters. Incidentally, the "Secre-

tary to the Registrar" was able to expound new Rule 9 (A), which provides preferential treatment by which members of the College of Nursing, Ltd., can quickly and easily be placed on the State Register as second-hand entrants, without presenting credentials direct to the Council's responsible officials. In December last Miss Darbyshire was appointed to succeed Miss Dora Finch as Matron of University College Hospital, and the "urgent" duties of "Secretary to the Registrar" have been in abeyance for several months, greatly to the advantage of the monthly salary sheet and the Registered Nurses' pockets! It will be noted, however, that at the last meeting of the General Nursing Council on March 16, a recommendation was put forward, and agreed to, to fill the vacant post, and that this should be done—without advertising it—by the General Purposes Committee, Miss Cox-Davies having, in the meantime, succeeded Mrs. Eustace Hills as Chairman of that Committee.

We now learn on good authority that Miss Dora Finch, the recently retired Matron of University College Hospital—*vides Achates* of the Chairman of the G.P. Committee and of Miss Riddell, the Registrar, has been inducted into this sinecure at a salary of £5 a week!

Here we find a lady recently retired on a pension of £250 a year, and who is reported to have ample private means, taking a post which could be filled by many retired sisters or nurses at half the cost, and to whom the salary would be of the utmost help and comfort, after long terms of ill-paid service, who have very limited pensions if any, and no private means. We could name a dozen such. Women, moreover, who loyally worked for the uplift of their beloved profession through State Registration, the while Miss Ruth Darbyshire, Miss Dora Finch, and other highly placed Matrons, ranged themselves for years with their employers in opposition to the aspirations of their professional colleagues; who signed "Anti-Registration" manifestoes, and by every means in their power opposed the passing of the Nurses' Registration Acts, despicable and self-interested conduct for which they should feel and express some measure of remorse, rather than thrust themselves into office at high salaries, paid by their erstwhile—now victorious—victims.

If every time a bosom friend of the Registrar is retired, or invalided, from office, a well-paid sinecure post has to be created at Headquarters for her benefit, it is high time the registered nurses, who pay the cost, should demand that such appointments should be advertised, and not made behind closed doors by a small Committee.

We have no hesitation in exposing this, the latest evidence of nepotism at G.N.C. Headquarters. Such unblushing jobs need wide publicity, and we hope our remarks may meet the eye of Mr. T. Griffiths, M.P.; and add to the information forthcoming in the reply to his question in the House of Commons on March 27th.

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