

## GENERAL NURSING COUNCIL MEETING, JUNE 15th.

### POINTS FOR NURSES TO NOTE AND REMEMBER.

#### CORRESPONDENCE.

#### FLOUTING THE NURSES' REGISTRATION ACT.

The most important point was emphasised in the letter dated June 12th read from the Minister of Health, in which he informed the Council "that he was not at present prepared to issue a compulsory Syllabus of Training" (the new Council having voted to scrap the Syllabus of General Training prepared by its predecessor), and in consequence the Syllabuses of Training for Male, Mental, Sick Children, and Fever Nurses are all to be scrapped. When the new Council voted to deprive the General nurses of their right to a "prescribed training," it sent up for approval and signature to the Minister of Health the four draft syllabuses for specialists. We have awaited with interest the Minister's reply. Now we know. All probationers in training are to suffer alike—hospitals, general and special, will be approved by the G.N.C. without conforming to any compulsory standard of training or teaching; so future probationers must submit themselves to a State Examination without anyone being responsible that they are systematically prepared for it, and we are in just the same chaotic educational condition we were before the Registration Acts were passed, with the additional disadvantage of having been jockeyed out of our rights under the Act by the new G.N.C. and the present Minister of Health. Publicity must be given to this high-handed flouting of our rights and privileges under the Act, and we must fight till we obtain them.

#### REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE.

The stamp bill of the Council is still £200 a month, and £20 to insure the huge clerical staff employed, so that some 2,600 Existing Nurses must register at a guinea fee to pay for these two items of expenditure alone! When we see month by month more and more officials employed the salary sheet is astounding, and little of the nurses' money goes into nurses' pockets. We hear the Riddell régime prefers *not* to employ professional women, so that even the examinations officer's post was given to a young clerk from University College in preference to an experienced professional woman—salary £375 to £400. Our salary list must now be soaring to some £6,000 a year, all subscribed by nurses, whilst they are excluded from earning their living in posts they are well able to fill. So hotly do some registered nurses resent this injustice that we believe thousands of retention fees will remain unpaid. No wonder.

#### REPORT OF UNIFORM COMMITTEE.

Every class of nurse is to wear exactly the same uniform, so that there is to be no outward and visible sign of a general—as apart from a specialist

—nurse. Thus, as emphasised by Miss Musson, a specialist entering for training in general nursing may wear the protected uniform of the general nurse before having attained proficiency in general nursing.

The absurd recommendation that male nurses should wear the Badge in mufti, and women nurses (as usual) be dictated to as to how, where, and when they might exhibit it, has been rescinded. Why are women nurses always treated like children—or worse, mental defectives? The Act gives Registered Nurses the right to wear the Badge—without any restrictions—so this footling suggestion should never have arisen.

The Council should have taken power to recall the Badge under certain circumstances; but, of course, it has taken no such precaution, so that presumably there is nothing to prevent a criminal wearing it once out of duress vile!

#### REPORT REGISTRATION COMMITTEE.

##### REGISTRATION FEES FOR FUTURE NURSES.

All English and Welsh Nurses will pay £2 2s. registration fee after the term of grace, but Scottish Nurses through reciprocal registration only pay £1 1s. to be placed on the English Register. We see no recommendation that the reciprocal Rule shall be identical between England and Scotland, as it should be. A rule has been passed by the Scottish Council providing for re-registration thereof nurses already registered by the General Nursing Council for England and Wales, "provided such nurses were either trained in Scotland or are resident or practising there." Our Council has so far as we know taken no such precaution to prevent undue competition by Scottish nurses in England. As we say the Rule should be reciprocal in all particulars; and if Scottish nurses can practice in England without training here—paying only half the registration fee—the same privilege must be accorded to English nurses in Scotland.

Applications for registration ran up from 750 the week ending on May 12th to 1,003 on June 2nd. Presumably Rule 9 (r) (g) is responsible for the rise, as untrained women were eligible at that date to flood the General Part of the Register.

The press is excluded when applications for registration are under consideration, so it did not appear what action was taken on the application of the lady excluded from the Midwives' Roll for a punishable offence.

#### EDUCATION COMMITTEE'S REPORT.

The details of the three candidates' qualifications, recommended for the position of Examinations Officer, were not made public. One, we believe, was a highly-qualified registered nurse; another formerly a V.A.D.; but, of course, the election of the third, the unprofessional woman recommended by Sir Cooper Perry, was a foregone conclusion; and we have now the pleasure of providing this young clerk, who knows nothing of the technique of our highly-skilled profession, with a salary of £375, rising £400 per annum.

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