

GENERAL NURSING COUNCIL FOR ENGLAND AND WALES.

CONFERENCE AT THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH.

REPORT OF CONFERENCE HELD AT THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH ON THURSDAY, DECEMBER 13TH, 1923, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE INVITATION CONVEYED IN THE MINISTER'S LETTER TO THE GENERAL NURSING COUNCIL FOR ENGLAND AND WALES, READ AT ITS MEETING ON NOVEMBER 16TH, PRESENTED BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL ON DECEMBER 18TH.

The subjoined Report was made by the Chairman of the General Nursing Council at its meeting on December 18th :—

The following representatives attended on behalf of the Council :—Sir Wilmot Herringham (Chairman), Dr. Bedford Pierce (Chairman of Mental Nursing Committee), Mr. Donaldson, Miss Wiese, Miss Lloyd Still (Chairman of Education and Examination Committee), Dr. Goodall, and the Registrar.

There were present, in addition, the President and some members of the Medico-Psychological Association, with representatives from the Ministry of Health, the Scottish Board of Health, and the Board of Control.

Certain suggestions were made on behalf of the Ministry of Health and of the Board of Control, who appeared to think that it would be unfortunate if two examinations continued. Your members felt unable to accept these suggestions since they appeared contrary to the tenor of the Nurses' Registration Act, which enjoins that the Council "shall make rules for regulating the conduct of any examinations which may be prescribed as a condition of admission to the Register and in matters ancillary to or connected with any such examinations." To any proposals tending to detract from the position of the Council thus laid down your members felt it necessary to answer in the negative. At the same time they pointed out that since for a considerable time many Mental Nurses would certainly prefer to continue without registration, the examinations and certificate of the Medico-Psychological Association would still be necessary as before. Your members, however, were well aware that for the last thirty years the education and examination of Mental Nurses had been entirely conducted by the Medico-Psychological Association, and considered that while on the one hand it was only just to recognise the value of this work, on the other hand the Council could not but gain, if the assistance of a body of such experience and such position could be obtained. In addition your members also were convinced that it would be disastrous to the cause of education if any divergence of opinion took place between the Council and the Association. They suggested, therefore, first that the Association might take up an advisory position towards the Council in matters of education and examination, and, secondly, that since all the Council's future examiners would be either members, or nurses

working under the direction of members of the Association, it would be of great assistance to the Council if the Association were to select examiners and nominate them to the Council for appointment. These suggestions were accepted by the members of the Association, and your members desire to record their high appreciation of the attitude they adopted throughout the discussion.

The following recommendations are therefore proposed to the Council by the Chairman of Council; acting on behalf of the members who attended the Conference :—

Recommendation—

1. That the General Nursing Council invite the Medico-Psychological Association to form an Advisory Committee to assist the General Nursing Council, such Advisory Committee to meet the Mental Nursing Committee of the General Nursing Council for the purposes of matters appertaining to the Final Examinations; the resolutions of such meetings to be recommendations to the Council.

2. That the General Nursing Council invite the Medico-Psychological Association to nominate the Examiners for the Final Examinations, for appointment by the General Nursing Council.

POINTS FOR NURSES TO NOTE AND REMEMBER.

In connection with our Report of the meeting of the General Nursing Council for England and Wales, on December 18th, our readers will do well to note the following points :—

THE PRESENT FINANCIAL POSITION.

The present financial position of the General Nursing Council for England and Wales is one which must cause grave concern to Registered Nurses, and, we imagine, to the Chairman and Members of the Finance Committee. It must be remembered that the sole source of income of the Council is from Registration Fees. These for the period of five weeks, November 10th to December 8th inclusive, assuming that all the applicants paid £2 2s. would amount to £304 18s. The outgoings sanctioned at the Council meeting on December 18th were :—

	£	s.	d.	
Stamps	150	0	0	} Sanctioned by Council.
Petty cash	15	0	0	
Insurance stamps	25	0	0	
Salaries	450	0	0	} Approximate Estimate.
	£640	0	0	

We believe in placing salaries at £450 for five weeks that we have underestimated them, yet it will be observed that on these items alone the expenditure was more than double the income, and that rent, rates, taxes, upkeep, equipment, travelling expenses and subsistence allowance of members of the Council, and other incidental expenses, have still to be met. It is evident, therefore that it must be drawing heavily upon its capital, i.e., the fees received during the period of grace up to July, 1923, which should be invested and a permanent income derived from the interest earned.

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