

## THE PROFESSIONAL UNION OF TRAINED NURSES. ANNUAL REPORT.

In spite of the efforts of those interested in keeping Nurses in subjection and depriving them of self-government, the Professional Union of Trained Nurses has completed a successful year.

It is endeavouring to ascertain what has been done with the money of the Nation's Fund for Nurses, in view of the fact that something like £200,000 has been collected for that Fund, and that many Nurses are still in need of help owing to their war services. It is specially directing its attention to the £80,000 which seems to have been handed over to the College of Nursing, Ltd., of the spending of which no account appears to have been published.

The Union has now four Branches, and others in process of formation.

The Social Club was responsible for several enjoyable entertainments during the year.

The Guild of Handicrafts has been a great success, and many members have received help thereby. Information *re* classes, &c., can be obtained from the Guild Secretary, by those wishing to join.

The thanks of the Nurses are especially due to the Union's solicitor, who has been kind in giving advice and assistance. Also to the medical men and women who have always readily helped the Members when ill, and to the dentists, opticians, &c., who have given them special terms.

The insurance arrangements have proved satisfactory, and at least one Member who insured through the Union against sickness and accident has lately received substantial monetary benefit.

It is a matter of satisfaction that the President—Councillor Beatrice Kent—has been elected to the Executive Committee of the National Council of Women of Great Britain and Ireland on the nomination of the P.U.T.N.

The Union has taken part in many deputations to Ministers and other Members of the Government, notably to the Minister of Health, for the purpose of petitioning him to advise the Prime Minister to appoint a Select Parliamentary Committee to enquire into Nursing affairs in general, and the College of Nursing, Ltd., and the Nation's Fund for Nurses in particular.

Many questions have been asked in the House of Commons relative to Nursing, at the instance of the Union.

It is satisfactory that a sound foundation has been laid for the Protection Fund, which will in the future be a tower of strength to the Union.

Members have enjoyed attending performances at various Theatres, owing to the kindness of the Managers.

MAUDE MACCALLUM, S.R.N.,  
Hon. Secretary.

## GUY'S HOSPITAL PAST AND PRESENT NURSES' LEAGUE.

The Annual Meeting (the twenty-fourth) and sixteenth Annual Dinner of the Guy's Hospital Nurses' League, which is always such an enjoyable function at this time of year, will be held in the Nurses' Home on Friday, May 2nd. Dinner will be at 7 p.m., and the Annual Meeting at 8 p.m. The usual Photographic and Needlework Exhibitions will be held, and these exhibits are always interesting and beautiful, the high standard attained making the task of the judges in awarding the prizes a difficult one.

No less than 1,300 copies of the new issue of the Nurses' League Register (which is, in fact, a Directory) have been sent out, and 392 members have testified to their appreciation of its usefulness by contributing £60 17s. 4d. towards the cost of printing and publishing it.

## THE MATRONS' COUNCIL.

A Meeting of the Matrons' Council will be held by the kind invitation of the Committee and Matron (Miss Sander-son) at Mount Vernon Hospital, Northwood, on Wednesday, May 21st, at 3 p.m. A report will be presented of the Deputation to the Minister of Health on March 11th, to ask for a Select Committee to consider the whole Nursing Question. Mount Vernon is a beautifully situated and equipped hospital, well worth a visit.

## THE NATIONAL HEALTH.

### THE HOSPITAL PROBLEM.

An important Conference on the Hospital Problem, convened by the Executive Committee of the Labour Party, of Hospital, Medical, and Kindred Organisations, was held in the Caxton Hall on Monday and Tuesday, April 28th and 29th, the problem being considered from "The Labour View" and "The Voluntary Hospital View." "The Doctors' View" and "The State and Rate-Aided Hospitals" were also discussed. The point of view of trained nurses was not invited on the agenda, which is regrettable considering how large a part they play in the hospital problem.

APRIL 28TH—MORNING SESSION.

The chair at the Morning Session, in the absence of Mr. C. T. Cramp, Vice-Chairman of the Labour Party Executive Committee, was taken by Mr. Herbert Morrison, M.P., who read an important letter from the Prime Minister regretting that an engagement in his constituency prevented him from welcoming the Conference.

Mr. Ramsay MacDonald wrote:—

"No section of the community professing to have the welfare of the people at heart can afford to ignore the straits into which the war and its economic aftermath have placed so many of our hospitals. The policy of drift that has led to the neglect of reform in so many departments of life and government—and in particular the housing of the working-classes may be mentioned—has inevitably reacted to the detriment of the people. It has intensified those evils which spring from overcrowding and a low vitality, and has accentuated the difficulties of those public authorities and voluntary agencies alike which have been striving to cope with disease and the pain and suffering that accompany it.

"Our hospital system—if such a chaos as now exists can be dignified by such a title—has been and still remains a symptom of our inadequate civic organisation. In intention it typifies the good-heartedness of our people; in practice it exemplifies the co-operation of hand and brain workers in the work of the world for which our movement stands; but in effect it falls far short of the achievements that its keenest friends and supporters desire.

"Pending the day when the country becomes more fully aware of the need for prevention—the prevention of destitution and of disease—we cannot stand idly by and allow our curative centres to suffer from neglect. The time has come for a survey of the whole field of hospital activity; for a finer realisation of the part that medical men and nurses, hospital managers and administrators, play in the life of the people, and, above all, for the devising of ways and means whereby the great services thus rendered may be pursued free from the unhealthy methods by which some of our hospitals have had to seek finance in these latter days.

"In this sphere of our national life, as in so many others, the needs of the time demand the application of the scientific spirit, the co-ordination of effort, and the elimination of waste. I feel very strongly that society has never yet appreciated and valued the labours of those great public servants who, often without fee, reward, or publicity, are striving in the fine spirit of true scientific research to reduce the sufferings and increase the health of our frail bodies. It is something new for a political party to seek to study problems of this kind, but I feel sure that nothing but gain can follow a frank discussion between Labour people and the representatives of those various sections of the public who in one way and another seek to bind the wounds and succour the distresses of so many thousands of our suffering fellow-citizens. I trust your discussions will be pursued with the utmost thoroughness and understanding and that some common and wise policy may be their outcome."

The Chairman, in opening the Conference, said it was a novel one in the history of hospitals, and political parties. The reason was probably that no section of the community was more interested in hospitals than the working classes for whom, in the main, they were intended. Whatever criticism might be made in the course of the Conference the Labour Party had warm gratitude for the services rendered to the community by the voluntary hospitals and for the sacrificing work of their medical and nursing staffs.

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