

## EXTRACTS FROM A LETTER FROM THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH.

We note that in the extracts from a letter from the Ministry of Health, forwarded to the Education Committee by the Council's Solicitor, the writers dilate upon points which have occurred to them in looking over the draft Rules as they now stand. We desire, therefore, to point out that the only person at the Ministry who has authority over the business of the General Nursing Council in certain directions is the Minister of Health, and letters not written under that authority have no force.

## THE FEE FOR REGISTRATION.

The abolition of the fee for Registration has really been brought about by the agitation of the Male Mental Nurses Trade Union, which strongly disapproves of the payment of a fee of £7 7s. in all to finance a Secretariat of forty-three persons and a huge mansion in Portland Place, and we consider that figures in its support should have been presented by the Finance Committee which proposed it.

The Chairman of the Council has always insisted that the examination side of the Council's work must be self-supporting, and similarly the Registration side. This can no longer be the case. There will be no source of income for conducting the business of the Register beyond the annual half-crowns paid as a retention fee; further financial help for the maintenance and publication of the Register can only be obtained from the uncertain balance available after the expense of the examinations has been defrayed—a most invidious position in which to place the principal work under the Nurses' Registration Act. Apparently the mansion in Portland Place must also be maintained on the examination fees.

Knowing something of business we take the strongest exception to this most dangerous finance, and we do hope that the Minister of Health will notify the General Nursing Council that the Nurses' Act is a Registration Act, and that Examinations Fees should only be charged on a scale which will cover that part of its work.

As agreed by the General Nursing Council it has deprived itself of any income to maintain the Registration Department, to publish the Register, and to pay for the Central Office.

No proposition which has been made by this futile Council has been so irresponsible and dangerous as the recommendation of free Registration. If it is not going to cost £5 5s. to conduct the Examinations, then decrease the charge to £3 3s. and maintain a Registration fee, as provided in the Act.

We call upon Mr. Donaldson, the Chairman of the Finance Committee, who put forward this extraordinary proposal, to supplement it with sound financial statistics, both for the conduct of examinations and registration. No data whatever were presented to the Council in support of it.

## BOARD OF EXAMINERS.

The extreme reluctance of the Chairman of the Education and Examination Committee, supported by Miss Musson and DR. GOODALL, to give any information as to the medical men and Registered Nurses whom they recommended as the Board of Examiners, was most astonishing, and MISS SEYMOUR YAPP is to be congratulated on pressing for, and eventually extracting information as to the qualifications of the Nurses.

She further, rightly, objected to the appointment of "Assistant Examiners" being left to the Education and Examination Committee, considering that the directly-elected Representatives of the Nurses on the Council should have an opportunity of expressing an opinion on so important a matter.

Miss Cox-Davies' remark that these Representatives sat not only on the Council, but on the Committee, was irrelevant, especially as through personal animus members may

be excluded from the Committees, as in the case of Miss Wiese. Parliament has deputed the General Nursing Council to govern, and, by deputing its duties to Committees it should not become merely a body to record their decisions.

What should have been done, if the secretarial business of the Council were properly performed, which it is not—is that the names and qualifications of the applicants for all official posts should be submitted on a printed schedule, and placed before the Council. The sooner such a schedule is drawn up for future use the better.

The fact that the Council has appointed a laywoman, who does not know one hospital or nursing qualification from another, to the highly responsible professional position of Examinations Officer, at a very high salary, may account for ignoring professional qualifications in recommending examiners, and for the *eleven mistakes* which the Chairman had to correct in Council in the list submitted!

Why, also, should the examiners at the *viva voce* examination be given the title of Assistant Examiners, and why should the Nurse Examiners be paid a lower fee than members of the Medical Profession? Every sort of depreciation is imposed to prevent the nurses from receiving the prestige as a profession due to them under their Registration Act.

All the Examiners should hold equal rank, and receive equal pay, and be appointed by the Council.

All these professional points should have been publicly discussed in Council by our direct representatives. We deplore their silence.

## GENERAL NURSING COUNCIL FOR SCOTLAND.

NOTE of PROCEEDINGS at Meeting of the General Nursing Council for Scotland held at 13, Melville Street, Edinburgh, on 28th March, 1924.

The Council further considered the report of the proceedings at the conference between representatives of the Scottish Division of the Medico-Psychological Association and representatives of the Council, continued from last Meeting. After considerable discussion the following resolution was unanimously agreed to:—"That the Council should invite the Medico-Psychological Association to form an Advisory Committee to meet with the Education and Examination Committee of the Council for the purpose of considering matters pertaining to the Final Examination for Mental Nurses, and that the Council should further invite the Medico-Psychological Association to nominate Examiners for the Final Examination for consideration by the Council.

This resolution was adopted only on condition that in Scotland one Preliminary Examination for all classes of Nurses should be held by the Council on behalf of the Medico-Psychological Association and the Council.

The Council considered a letter from the General Nursing and Midwives' Council (Northern Ireland) dated 19th March, 1924, inviting the views of the Council as to the question of allowing the continuance of arrangements existing in Ireland under which Nurses taking four years' training at certain General Hospitals spend a part of this period not exceeding one year in a Special Hospital, this year being taken at one or more times during the four years' course. On the recommendation of the Education and Examination Committee, the Council resolved to reply that they saw no objection to these arrangements, provided the nurse completed a course of not less than three years in the General Hospital.

The Council approved various arrangements made by the Education and Examination Committee for holding the Written part of the Council's Preliminary Examination on

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)