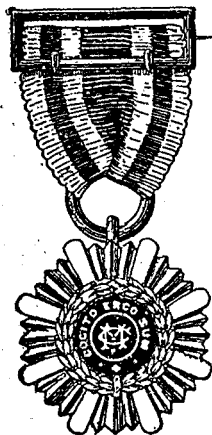


THE NURSES' ORGANISATIONS.

THE MATRONS' COUNCIL OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.



The Annual Meeting of the Matrons' Council was held at the Royal British Nurses' Association Club on Saturday, January 19th, at 3 p.m.

The President, Miss Kathleen Smith, S.R.N., R.R.C., was in the chair.

Apologies were received for absence from many members.

BUSINESS.

After the Minutes were confirmed, Mrs. Bedford Fenwick proposed that the following expression of gratification be sent to H.R.H. Princess Arthur of Connaught, Duchess of Fife, S.R.N. :—

"The Matrons' Council of Great Britain and Ireland, in Annual Meeting assembled, respectfully conveys to H.R.H. Princess Arthur of Connaught, S.R.N., its pleasure, as an affiliated Society of the Royal British Nurses' Association, at her acceptance of the Presidency of the Corporation. It is especially glad that the Princess should have the right to the title of State Registered Nurse."

Miss Carson-Raesecouded, and the Resolution was carried unanimously with applause. The Hon. Secretary was directed to send a copy of the Resolution to the Princess.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Letters were read—

(a) From the National Council of Women (Women Police Patrols Sectional Committee) asking for co-operation in its representation to the Executive of the British Empire Exhibition, of the vital necessity for the employment of women police at the forthcoming Exhibition at Wembley, in view of the large number of women and girls from the Empire and Dominions who will visit it.

It was unanimously agreed to co-operate with the N.C.W. in furthering this important provision.

(b) From the N.U.S.E.C. asking for co-operation in their proposed concerted effort to secure that the Bill to provide pensions for civilian widows with children should become law this session. After discussion on the moral and financial difficulties involved, it was decided that a reply be sent to the effect that, while in sympathy with the principle, the Council awaits further information on the question of finance, and will consider a concrete scheme when such is put forward.

Other letters were considered and action taken.

ELECTION OF HON. OFFICERS.

The Chairman announced that the Vice-Presidents due to retire were Miss Huxley, Miss E. Ross, and Miss M. Lord and Miss Livingstone Charteris. There was also an extra vacancy which Miss M. Heather-Bigg had consented to fill.

The following were elected to fill the vacancies :—Miss Gooding, Miss Lamb, and Miss Charteris. It was agreed to invite Miss Alice Reeves, Lady Superintendent Sir Patrick Dun's Hospital, Dublin, to succeed Miss Huxley.

The Hon. Treasurer, Miss Villiers, and the Hon. Sec., Miss Hulme, were re-elected by acclamation.

RESOLUTIONS.

AMENDED PRESCRIBED SCHEME FOR THE ELECTION OF REGISTERED NURSES ON THE GENERAL PART OF THE REGISTER.

The Matrons' Council unanimously agreed to Petition the Minister of Health to agree to Major R. W. Barnett's Motion, (1) for the modification of the Prescribed Scheme for the election of Registered Nurses on the General Part of the Register; (2) for time allowed for returning Voting Papers; and (3) for minimising the autocratic powers of the Returning Officer, which will come under his consideration at an early date, according to the pledge given to Major Barnett in Parliament by a late Minister of Health, Mr. Neville Chamberlain.

Modifications Desired,

I.

Re QUALIFICATIONS OF PERSONS TO BE ELECTED.

To substitute for the present complicated qualifications the words :—

Eleven Registered Nurses (*i.e.*, Nurses Registered in the General Part of the Register).

N.B.—The persons entitled to nominate these Nurses are the Nurses Registered in the General Part of the Register.

REASON FOR AMENDMENT.

As proposed in the Scheme at present there are seven divisions in which Registered Nurses must vote for their 11 Representatives on the General Part of the Register, which makes the filling in of the Voting Papers most complicated and confusing.

Further, out of the 11 Representatives, Registered Nurses must vote for six Matrons, the remaining five being either Matrons or Nurses. This is most undemocratic, and a curtailment of the free choice of the Nurses on the General Part of the Register.

No such restriction is imposed upon Nurses on the Supplementary Parts of the Register, who are free to elect any Registered Nurse to represent them, whatever position she holds in the Nursing World, and this principle has been adopted by the General Nursing Council for Scotland.

Matrons come on to the Register on their qualifications as Nurses, and should stand for election as such.

II.

Re TIME ALLOWED FOR RETURNING VOTING PAPERS.

To substitute *twenty-one* days for the *seven* days at present allowed for the return of the Voting Papers. The effect of this would be to require the Returning Officer to send out the Voting Papers to each person qualified to take part in the Election at least twenty-one days before they must be returned.

REASON FOR AN AMENDMENT.

The permanent address to be inscribed on the Register given by Registered Nurses is usually their home address, whereas a nurse may be holding a post at the other end of the Kingdom, or be at a private case, thus the Voting Paper may have to be re-addressed more than once. Many nurses will therefore be disfranchised if only seven days are allowed for the return of the Voting Paper.

In the first election in December, 1922, owing to the mismanagement of the Election, resulting in a shortage of Voting Papers for some thousand Electors, there was not time to print and send out more papers within the prescribed time, and the Election had to be quashed, putting the Registered Nurses to the needless expense of a second Election, amounting to some hundreds of pounds.

III.

Re POWERS OF RETURNING OFFICER.

Clause 8 (2) gives the Returning Officer absolute powers, and completely exonerates him from responsibility for any irregularity or illegality, which may be perpetrated in the course of the Election, purposely or otherwise.

AMENDMENT DESIRED.

It is desired that Clause 8 (2) be altogether omitted, 8 (1) being thought sufficient. No such provision is incorporated in the Schedule for the Election of the direct representatives on the General Medical Council.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)