

THE OPENING OF THE NEW HEADQUARTERS OF THE GENERAL NURSING COUNCIL FOR ENGLAND AND WALES.

The opening of the New Headquarters of the General Nursing Council for England and Wales, at 20, Portland Place, W., took place on Saturday, April 4th, when Princess Mary Viscountess Lascelles, visited the offices and performed the opening ceremony. Her Royal Highness, who was attended by Miss Kenyon-Slaney was received by Sir Wilmot P. Herringham, K.C.M.G., C.B., F.R.C.S., Chairman of the Council, who presented the members of the Reception Committee, Miss Lloyd Still, C.B.E., R.R.C., Chairman of the Education and Examination Committee, Miss E. M. Musson, R.R.C., Chairman of the Registration Committee, Mr. Robert Donaldson, Chairman of the Finance Committee, and the Registrar, Miss M. S. Riddell, R.R.C. The Registrar presented to Her Royal Highness a basket of spring flowers, together with two Liberty Dolls, a Robin Redbreast, and a Brown Gnome for her two children.

The Princess, escorted by the Chairman, and the Reception Committee, then proceeded to the Reception Room, where those members of the General Nursing Council able to be present, were presented. First the doctors and male nurses, then the Matrons and other women Nurse Members of the Council.

This room is ordinarily the Nurses' Reception and Waiting Room, and we are glad to see that the furniture selected with so much care for the corresponding Room at 12, York Gate, Regent's Park, N.W.—so that the Registered Nurses might feel that they had a dignified reception room in the offices maintained by their own contributions—has been transferred to it, and gives it colour and charm. It was decorated on April 4th with pink and white carnations and asparagus fern, and pink rambler roses.

Her Royal Highness then proceeded to the Council Chamber, the front room of the house on the first floor, with three French windows opening on to a balcony, which has been decorated in a shade of oatmeal, picked out in white. The Adam's frame to the mirror over the mantelpiece is also painted white, and the doors are mahogany.

Here were assembled the invited guests, including the Mayor and Mayoress of St. Marylebone (Mr. and Mrs. F. W. Dean), Sir Douglas Hogg, Member of Parliament for the Borough, the Dowager Countess of Airlie, Lady Morant and Miss Morant, Miss Hodgins, R.R.C., Matron-in-Chief, Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service, Dame Maud McCarthy, G.B.E., R.R.C., Matron-in-Chief Territorial Army Nursing Service, Miss Cruickshank, R.R.C., Matron-in-Chief, Princess Mary's Royal Air Force Nursing Service.

The Dedication.

The House was then dedicated by the Archdeacon of London, Canon E. E. Holmes, who prayed that the Council, and all who worked therein, might have clearness of vision, the power to plan, and wisdom to organise, lofty ideals and strong common sense, purity of heart and singleness of purpose, courtesy and unselfishness, concluding: "To the Glory of God, and the advancement of the Nursing Profession, we dedicate this House as the Headquarters of our General Nursing Council."

The Opening.

On the invitation of the Chairman of the Council, Princess Mary then briefly performed the opening ceremony in the following words:—

"I have much pleasure in declaring the new Headquarters of the General Nursing Council open."

Further presentations were then made to Her Royal Highness, including the Matrons-in-Chief above-mentioned, the Architect and the Consulting Engineer of the offices and the Builder.

The ceremony then concluded, the usual courtesy when a Royal Personage publicly opens a building of publicly thanking her, and expressing appreciation of the service thus rendered, being omitted, nor, as again is customary, was any account given of the objects and work of the Council.

Her Royal Highness then passed through the folding doors into the Registrar's office, which is coloured to correspond with the Council Room, the Adam's decorative work being picked out in white. She passed on to the office of Miss Davies, the Assistant Registrar, where the details regarding the State Registered Uniform and the issuing of forms for the uniform and badge were shown. The office of Miss Bowie, the Registrar's Secretary, was next visited.

In the Registration Department Miss Barker, the Registration Clerk, explained the system of registration and both the Manuscript Register, and a copy of the Printed Register, were on view for her Royal Highness' inspection.

The Princess admired the way in which the manuscript Register was kept by Miss Hodgson, the clerk who had made the majority of entries. In the department of the Accountant, Miss Smith, the Registration, Examination, Badge and Retention Books were shown.

In the Examination Department the system upon which the examinations are conducted was explained.

In the Stencilling Department the Princess showed much interest in the work done with two machines by Miss Sargeant and Miss King. One machine is devoted to cyclostyling the minutes and confidential documents, and the other to more general work.

The Postal Department, and the Interviewing Officer's room were also visited, and also the Basement for the purpose of inspecting the Registry, and the system of filing employed, also the Stationery Store, the Examinations Store, and the heating chamber. In each department the principal official was presented to Her Royal Highness. The Princess also inspected the safe which has been built under the main staircase, where the Manuscript Register in the different parts defined by Statute is kept.

Her Royal Highness took tea with the Chairman, and certain members of the Council, in the Reception Room, where the arrangements were in charge of Miss M. E. Sparshott and Miss M. L. Wiese.

Tea was served to the guests in the Chairman's room, where Miss Alsop, Miss Bremner and Mr. Stratton acted as hostesses and host. Before leaving, the Princess signed the visitors' book, and upon her expressing approval of the pen provided for her use, she was informed by the Registrar that it was the pen with which the Minister of Health, Dr. Addison, had signed the Rules, framed by the Council, in July, 1921. This was, of course, entirely erroneous information, the Minister of Health in office in July, 1921, who signed the Rules under which the Council was empowered to open the Register of Nurses, being Sir Alfred Mond, for whose use, upon the proposition of Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, at that date Chairman of the Registration Committee, a silver penholder was selected; to be preserved, after the signature of the Statutory Rules as a treasured possession of the General Nursing Council.

Before leaving, the Princess stated that it had given her the greatest pleasure to open the Headquarters of the Council, and to see the work done.

The house consists of three floors, beside the ground floor, and the "half" floor in which the Registration Department is located. There is a flat in which the caretakers are housed, consisting of sitting-room, living room, kitchen, bathroom and two bedrooms. Other rooms are assigned as a rest room, and a room in which a member of the Council staying in London for the night, can be accommodated, if desired.

We are asked to state that it is hoped in the near future to give all Registered Nurses an opportunity of inspecting the Council's offices if they wish to do so.

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