

## GENERAL NURSING COUNCIL FOR ENGLAND AND WALES.

The eighty-third meeting of the General Nursing Council for England and Wales was held on Friday, September 23rd, at 20, Portland Place, London, W.1. The Chairman of the Council, Miss E. M. Musson, R.R.C., presided.

### Disciplinary Case.

The Chairman reported that the Registrar had been summoned to appear at a Police Court in Liverpool, in connection with the disciplinary case considered at the last meeting of the Council, and had appeared. She had since received notice that she would be required to attend at the Assizes at Liverpool in connection with the case.

### Nurses and Evidence as to Cause of Death.

The Chairman reported a letter from the Matron of the Wrexham and War Memorial Hospital, asking for the support of the Council in her contention to the Home Office that it is no part of the duty of a nurse to give evidence as to the cause of death of a patient, as nurses of that hospital had been directed to do by the Wrexham Coroner. Miss Musson asked whether it would be the wish of the Council that she should write, as Chairman, to the Home Office, saying that there is nothing in the curriculum of nursing education defined by the General Nursing Council for England and Wales to qualify a nurse to give such evidence. This was agreed.

### Finance.

Bills and claims submitted for payment by the Finance Committee were approved, and the sums of £150 for stamps, £25 for Insurance stamps, and £15 for petty cash were allowed.

The Finance Committee raised no objection to the recommendation of the General Purposes Committee that three foolscap steel filing cabinets be purchased for the Examinations Department at a cost of £7 5s. 6d. each.

### Recommendation.

The following recommendation of the Finance Committee was discussed at some length:—

"That as a large amount of time must be spent by the Chairman of Council in work for the Council in addition to the time spent at the meetings of the Council and Committees, and further that expense must be inevitably incurred thereby which cannot be defined under the travelling and subsistence allowances as allowed for attendance at meetings, the Minister of Health be approached as to a method of remedying a condition which might in future prevent a suitable candidate from accepting the position of Chairman."

DR. GOODALL inquired whether it was proposed to approach the Minister by deputation or by letter?

The CHAIRMAN thought this was left to her discretion.

MISS COWLIN inquired whether this proposal had been referred back by the Council for report?

SIR JENNER VERRALL said that he did not intend to vote either way, but he thought that the nurses who supported it should go very fully into the question. To carry out the proposal would require not only a change in the Regulations but an Amendment to the Nurses' Registration Act. He hoped the Chair of the Council would always be filled by a nurse. How far the present position was a bar to that needed careful consideration. If the nurses on the Council formed the opinion, which apparently they had, that the recommendation was desirable, then a sufficient brief should be drawn up which would appeal to the Ministry of Health, and if necessary to Parliament.

THE CHAIRMAN said the proposal was to approach the

Minister of Health, and to ask his advice as to how the present condition could be remedied.

MISS SPARSHOTT was of opinion that anyone filling the office of Chairman of the General Nursing Council for England and Wales incurred expenses which could not be included in travelling expenses and subsistence allowance, that the post could not be filled by a Matron in active practice, that most of those who retired had small incomes, and she, for one, when she retired, if elected to the chair would be unable to accept office under present circumstances. She strongly supported the Recommendation of the Finance Committee.

MISS ALSOP spoke in the same sense.

MISS COX DAVIES said she thought all the Council were convinced that the Chair should be occupied by a Member of the Nursing Profession and would like to think that she could hold it with dignity. She would like to ask, however, whether it was impossible to meet the difficulty under the Act, and she thought the first step was to ask the Ministry what could be done.

MISS BUSHBY moved that the Council go into Committee on this question, and this was done.

MISS COWLIN supported the views expressed by Miss Cox-Davies. She thought provision should be made for every kind of expense incurred by the Chairman, but she did not approve of appointing a salaried official.

MISS BUSHBY said, as the originator of the proposal, that it was never in her mind to appoint a salaried official, but to make provision for out-of-pocket expenses covered by an honorarium.

MISS COX-DAVIES said that a member of the Council had asked a question impossible to answer. It was difficult to say why the present position would debar some members of the Council from accepting the Chair if elected to it, but everyone who did public work knew that he had to put his hand in his pocket for expenses he could not put down in black and white.

They did not want a salaried officer as Chairman, the whole spirit of the Nurses' Registration Act was that the work was not paid for. She would rather the Chairman's expenses should be met by an allowance, and thought that the matter should be referred to the Minister of Health, and that the Ministry should be asked to say what they think about it.

MR. DONALDSON said that the Recommendation had been carefully worded with this object, and could be safely sent to the Ministry.

THE CHAIRMAN agreed with what Miss Cox-Davies said as to a salary, she would not approve of it.

MISS LLOYD-STILL said that as it was not intended to ask for a salary for the Chairman she agreed that the recommendation should go forward.

The Council then came out of Committee.

Recommendation 2 of the Finance Committee providing that the Minister of Health be approached as to a method of remedying a condition which might in future prevent a suitable candidate from accepting the position of Chairman was then approved.

### Registration.

The Council approved the recommendation of the Registration Committee.

"That the General Nursing Council agrees to accept for registration by reciprocity nurses trained in a General Hospital and registered by Examination on the General Part of the Register of Nurses of the Nurses' Registration Board of New South Wales, on the understanding that nurses registered by examination on the General Part of the Register of the General Nursing Council for England and Wales will be accepted on the same terms for registration by the Nurses' Registration Board of New South Wales."

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