

THREE GUINEA PRIZE COMPETITION.

We have much pleasure in announcing that the Prize of £3 3s. offered by Mrs. Rebecca Strong, F.B.C.N., for the best paper on "Why Registered Nurses should join the British College of Nurses," has been awarded to Miss Amy Phipps, S.R.N., F.B.C.N. ("Londonia"), Elm Cottage, Ashford, Middlesex.

WHY REGISTERED NURSES SHOULD JOIN THE BRITISH COLLEGE OF NURSES.

The British College of Nurses holds a unique position in the Nursing World of to-day, and it should be the aim and ambition of every trained Nurse to gain admission to its ranks. The reasons for this are many and obvious, after reading the Constitution and By-laws of the College.

It is the only organisation of its kind composed of Registered Nurses, founded for Registered Nurses, and governed by Registered Nurses. From its stated objects, it will be seen that the application for admission to the College is open to any and every Registered Certificated Woman Nurse on the General Part of the Register, whether she belongs to other Societies of Nurses or no, its constructive educational policy being quite distinctive. Its organisation and administration are in the hands of those who worked disinterestedly for years for the stabilisation of Nursing as a registered profession and to whom State Registration as a fact is largely due. Moreover, it would be difficult to name anyone who knows more about Nurses and nursing ethics than these officials.

The existence of such a College had been a dream to many of us for years, and the realisation of this dream was made possible by the anonymous gift of £100,000 by a generous Donor to whom we all feel we owe an immense debt of gratitude.

The objects of the College are quite unlike those of any previous nursing organisation—its essential aim being, after a term of grace, to issue its Diploma as the outcome of post-graduate study followed by successful examination, upon much the same lines as the examinations for specialists in Medicine. Thus the distinctive letters, F.B.C.N. or M.B.C.N., will mean a Nurse who realised that a three or four years' course of training, followed by the State examination, was but the solid foundation upon which the rest of her nursing education and experience was to be built; and that, having realised this, she has taken pains to prepare herself for the College examination that she might have the "Hall-mark" of the best type of British Nurse.

From the objects of the College it will be seen that its primary efforts are for the furtherance of the welfare of the patient and the Nurse, whether in hospital or in the home, and the retention of the idea, by Fellows and Members, of Nursing as a vocation, as well as a highly skilled profession. The fostering, or "re-fostering," of this idea was evidently in the mind of the generous Donor, who stipulated, with the gift for this object, that all meetings of the College, its Councils and Committees, should commence by the reading of its special prayers. One wonders whether this friend could have read an arresting editorial in our BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING several months ago, when this principle of Nursing as a vocation, but from a practical point of view, was clearly set forth. The College, from the very Articles of its Constitution, is bound to act as a stimulus to its Fellows and Members to give of their best to a profession which gives them unfathomable opportunities to serve mankind. Such an institution is bound to be a powerful agent in time for gathering recruits of the right type of education and outlook to take up nursing as a profession: it will be a living manifesto of what the

nursing profession can be, of what it can give to them, and what it can help them to give to others.

In this connection, particular attention should be drawn to Nos. 1 and 2 of the Objects of the College:—

No. 1. To promote in every possible manner the better education of women as Nurses for the sick of all classes.

No. 2. To unite together the best-trained women Nurses in the British Empire, for their mutual assistance, comfort, and support, and for their benefit by any measure which is considered suitable.

Again, the words of the "Obligation" have the same significance. In the Obligation, which every Fellow and Member is bound to make before admission to the College, she states that she will always fulfil to the best of her power, and without any selfish consideration, every duty entrusted to her in the nursing of the sick, that she will be absolutely loyal in the performance of her professional duties to the medical practitioner under whose direction she working, that she will regard as a sacred confidence any private or personal facts or information about her patients and their families, which may come to her in any form, that she will be true and loyal to the College, and, as far as may be in her power, assist any other member of the College who may ask for her help or advice, and, finally, so conduct herself in every way as to reflect credit on the Nursing Profession and the British College of Nurses.

The College has now been in existence for more than eighteen months. It has already inaugurated courses of instruction given by experts, free to College Members, non-members paying a small fee. It hopes to arrange further courses in the near future, such as will meet the needs of its Members. It also offers free legal advice and assistance to its Members, and, where necessary, help in time of sickness or adversity. It has formed a free pension fund to be applied in necessitous cases after a certain period.

The College is built on a sound financial basis, and Fellows and Members are gratified that the annual subscription has been fixed on a reasonable scale. For they feel that the sum of £2 2s. for a Fellow and £1 1s. for a Member, whilst within the limits of the Registered Nurse, are yet such as may reasonably be hoped to keep the College in such a state financially that its activities shall not be hampered for lack of funds. This satisfactory state of finance is greatly assisted by the fact that the appointed Trustees are well versed in nursing economics, as well as in the conduct of a great business organisation.

THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING, well known and appreciated for years in the nursing world, is now the Organ of the College, and is sent free to every Fellow and Member. The policies of the JOURNAL and of the College are, of course, identical, both encouraging freedom of thought and expression, and are entirely exempt from purely bureaucratic control.

We believe that the British College of Nurses has a great future. It has already accomplished much, and in a short time has become a great power, with infinite possibilities.

We are all proud of our beautiful home at 39, Portland Place, which is indeed worthy of its object; and our beautiful Diplomas, stamped with the College Seal, are amongst our most-prized treasures.

We look forward to the day when every Registered Nurse will feel it incumbent upon her to qualify for College Membership as a matter of course, and when every physician and surgeon will know that such qualification should mean a British Nurse of a high standard of excellence.

"LONDONIA."

The papers sent by Miss Theresa McGrath, F.B.C.N. ("Esprit de Corps"), and Miss Lilian Vian, F.B.C.N. ("Alsager"), are highly commended, and Consolation Prizes of half-a-guinea each have been awarded to them.

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