

the defenceless position of persons who have suffered from Encephalitis Lethargica when living at large in the world, and respectfully petition that a Deputation from this College may be received by yourself, as Home Secretary, to place before you the need for protective legislation for sufferers from this disease.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
GRACE REYNOLDS HALE,
Secretary.

THE REPLY.

In reply, the Council was informed that the Secretary of State for Home Affairs had transferred the letter to the Ministry of Health, "as the subject is one which appertains to that Department."

LETTER FROM THE MINISTER OF HEALTH.

The following letter was received from the Minister of Health:—

Ministry of Health,
Whitehall, S.W.1.
February, 1929.

POST-ENCEPHALITIS LETHARGICA.

SIR,—I am directed by the Minister of Health to refer to your letter of the 31st ultimo, which has been transmitted to this Department by the Home Office, and to state that in the first instance the Minister would be glad to receive a Statement in writing of the points which the British College of Nurses wish to bring before him and any suggestions which they desire to make for dealing with this problem.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
(Signed) R. W. CROOKE.

The Secretary,
The British College of Nurses.

It was decided to send the requested Statement to the Minister of Health, and also to send the following letter to the Home Secretary giving the reasons why the Council desires to place their views before his Department.

SECOND LETTER TO THE HOME SECRETARY.

The British College of Nurses,
39, Portland Place, London, W.1
February 28th, 1929.

SIR,—The reply of the Secretary of State for Home Affairs to my letter of January 31st, respectfully petitioning that he would receive a Deputation from the Council of the British College of Nurses, to place before him the urgent necessity for protective legislation for those who have suffered from Encephalitis Lethargica, has been read and considered by my Council.

The point which the Council of the British College of Nurses desires to emphasise, and develop, is that owing to degenerative mental changes the unfortunate sufferers from the after effects of this disease are not responsible for their actions, nevertheless, if they commit offences which bring them within the arm of the law, they are charged, and if convicted are punished, as ordinary criminals, whereas they are a most pitiable class of sick persons, deserving sympathy and help, instead of being sent to gaol, and branded for life as criminals, through no fault of their own.

My Council therefore regrets that its letter has been referred by the Home Secretary, whose Department has jurisdiction over the Criminal Courts, to the Minister of Health, who presumably does not exercise authority over Courts of Law, and again earnestly petitions that it may

be permitted to place evidence before the Home Secretary in support of its reasons for believing that this is a matter which appertains to the Home Department rather than to that of the Ministry of Health, as indicated in your letter of February 6th.

I am further directed to inform you that, in response to a request from the Minister of Health for a preliminary Statement of the points which the British College of Nurses wish to bring before him, my Council is forwarding to the Minister the document desired.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
GRACE REYNOLDS HALE,
Secretary.

To the Secretary.

Brief Statement on the Necessity for Protective Legislation for Persons who have suffered from Encephalitis Lethargica.

Sent to the Minister of Health.

In response to the request of the Minister of Health to be furnished with a Statement in writing of the points which the British College of Nurses desire to bring before him on the subject of Post Encephalitis Lethargica, the Council of the College respectfully desire to draw his attention to the following points:

1. The urgent necessity for protective legislation for those who have suffered from Encephalitis Lethargica on account of their helpless condition.

2. That unfortunate sufferers from the after effects of this disease, including changes in conduct and disposition, are not responsible for their actions, nevertheless if they commit offences which bring them within the arm of the law, they are charged and if convicted are punished as ordinary criminals, whereas, they are a most pitiable class of sick persons deserving sympathy and help, instead of being sent to gaol and branded for life as criminals, through no fault of their own.

3. That whereas provision is made for sufferers from this disease up to the age of 16 years, there is no adequate provision for either sex over this age, although the Council are aware that recently it has been decided to provide wards for men and women at the Northern Hospital, Winchmore Hill.

The Council of the British College of Nurses respectfully petition that the Minister of Health will consider:

1. Protective legislation for these sufferers.
2. Adequate provision and protection for both sexes over the age of 16 years in places where they can be kept under supervision, and in the case of offence, treated as sick persons and not as ordinary criminals.

Correspondence.

1. Letters of regret at inability to attend the Meeting owing to illness were received from Mrs. Lancelot Andrews and Miss S. A. Villiers.

2. Letter from a Fellow thanking the Council for help in a time of difficulty.

3. Letter from a Fellow in Manchester relative to Public Health Nurses.

4. Letter of thanks from Miss Agnes Henderson for the Grant of £50 towards her expenses in attending the International Congress of Nurses at Montreal in July, 1929.

5. Letter of thanks from a Fellow for "a most generous Grant" made to her by the Council, to help her to meet the expenses incurred in connection with a serious accident.

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