

British College of Nurses and the General Nursing Council for England and Wales.

Before discussion took place Miss A. M. Bushby, who is a member of the General Nursing Council, was invited to retire, which she did.

THE BRITISH COLLEGE OF NURSES.

39, Portland Place,  
London, W.1.

September 9th, 1931.

To

The Chairman and Members of the General  
Nursing Council for England and Wales.

Madam, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The letter from the Registrar, dated July 21st, in reply to an enquiry concerning a Resolution forwarded for your consideration in May last, was placed before my Council at its meeting on July 25th, and I was directed to express to you:—

(1) Its dissatisfaction that the considered communication addressed by Registered Nurses to their Governing Body, was withheld from its consideration by the Standing Committee to which it was submitted, presumably by some official; and

(2) Its opinion that the excuse given by the Education and Examination Committee for refusing to consider the advisability of its recommendation "that it is desirable that Nurse Examiners to the General Nursing Council for England and Wales should be required to pass an appropriate examination before being eligible for appointment" is not comparable, nor applicable to the position of the Medical Examiners in this connection; inasmuch as medical practitioners have satisfied the Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons as to their knowledge of the subjects in which they are to act as Examiners, while the knowledge of many State Registered Nurses is untested, in which case there is no evidence that they have either the technical knowledge, or the professional experience qualifying them to act as examiners.

(3) My Council notes that the Education and Examination Committee express the opinion that "it would not at the present time be practicable to put such examination into effect," and hopes that as this reform is urgently necessary the General Nursing Council will take the first opportunity of putting it into practice.

I am, Madam, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Yours faithfully,

ALICE STEWART BRYSON, Secretary.

THE GENERAL NURSING COUNCIL FOR ENGLAND AND WALES.

20, Portland Place,  
London, W.1.

September 10th, 1931.

Dear Madam,—I am instructed by the Chairman of Council to acknowledge your letter of September 9th, addressed to the Chairman and Members of the General Nursing Council for England and Wales.

Yours faithfully,

MARION S. RIDDELL, Registrar.

The Secretary,

The British College of Nurses,  
39, Portland Place, W.1.

THE GENERAL NURSING COUNCIL FOR ENGLAND AND WALES.

20, Portland Place,  
London, W.1.

September 18th, 1931.

Dear Madam,—I have been instructed to inform you that your letter of September 9th was placed before the Education and Examination Committee at their meeting on September 16th. I was desired to say in reply that the Committee have nothing to add to their previous communication.

Yours faithfully,

MARION S. RIDDELL, Registrar.

The Secretary,

The British College of Nurses,  
39, Portland Place, London, W.1.

The President emphasised the fact that the communications from the Council were addressed to the Chairman and Members of the General Nursing Council, and not to its Education Committee, and that therefore the replies received from that Committee were unsolicited. She felt

sure the Council would realise the futility of a Governing Body for the Nursing Profession, constituted under Act of Parliament, which deposes to a minority of its members the right to intercept and withhold important communications directed to it by members of its constituency, the Registered Nurses; and in so doing shirking responsibility which as candidates for election they had undertaken.

The General Nursing Council was largely composed of direct Nurse Representatives, and a liberal and sympathetic attitude towards the electorate was in conformity with the spirit of the age. Bureaucratic autocracy was quite out of date, and it was greatly to be deplored that it had been permitted to permeate the conduct of business.

By the present system the Press were practically deprived of information to which they should have access in the interest of the public and the profession.

In the discussion which followed it was emphasised that the demand for a standard of professional education for Nurse Examiners was urgently necessary, and, moreover, that the lack of tolerance by the G.N.C. in its attitude towards Registered Nurses was calculated to encourage a very undesirable "trade" spirit amongst the rank and file, which might have disastrous effects on nursing as a profession.

The Council were unanimously of opinion that Registered Nurses had a right to address their governing body, and that no official or minority of the Council were in order in withholding communications directly addressed to it.

In support of higher educational standards it was agreed to give publicity to this matter.

#### NOMINATIONS.

It was reported that Miss M. S. Cochrane, R.R.C., had accepted nomination for election as Vice-President, and that Miss E. T. Bickerton, R.R.C., and Miss R. E. Darbyshire, R.R.C., had accepted nomination for election as Directors of the National Council of Nurses of Great Britain.

#### CORRESPONDENCE.

1. Communication from Dr. Thomas Anderson, Superintendent of Asylum for Insane, St. John's, Newfoundland, was reported in which he wrote: "As a sequel to my request last December, that you suggest a Lady Superintendent for Asylum for Insane here, it now gives me great pleasure to acknowledge result of same. Miss M. Sim, at that time in charge of Hospital at Dumfries, accepted the post offered and took up her duties here in April.

"Through her ability, tact and skill, she handled the situation quickly and well, giving every satisfaction to those concerned. . . . The rapid improvement in tone and efficiency of the Institution makes us all feel very grateful to you for your wise choice."

The Council instructed the Secretary to write to Dr. Anderson to thank him for his letter, and say how pleased they were to be able to do anything to help the work for the mentally sick in which he was so deeply interested.

2. Letter from Mr. Comyns Berkeley. Reply agreed.

3. Letter from Miss E. M. Trenaman, Matron, Lady Galway Convalescent Home, South Australia, expressing satisfaction that Miss Menhennett had been appointed Local Consul of the British College of Nurses, for South Australia, and referring to the financial difficulties of exchange in Australia. A reply agreed.

4. Letters from Fellows reporting professional promotion. Congratulations of the Council to be sent to them.

5. Letter from Miss A. Garstang offering two of Florence Nightingale's Books, "Notes on Nursing" and "Organisation of Nurses," and other books, and offering to help the work in the College. Offers gratefully accepted.

6. Letters from Mr. H. C. Hunt *re* Book and Pamphlet on "The Retreat," York.

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