

THE INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF NURSES.

The Nurses' Association of Germany will have a somewhat sad report to place before the Board of Directors, I.C.N., when it meets in Geneva in June. Generaloberin M. Lühben, the President of the Association, writes to Headquarters:—

"From every point of view the economic position in Germany is most serious and our profession is naturally also involved. Private duty nurses, for example, find it very difficult to obtain employment. The sphere of philanthropic activities is being considerably reduced, the measures taken to cut down expenses prevent the engagement of further staff and in many cases work has been entirely discontinued, as for example in the case of a number of child welfare institutions."

NURSES' ORGANISATIONS.

THE MATRONS' COUNCIL OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

The annual meeting of the above Council will be held at 194, Queen's Gate, S.W.7, on Saturday, February 14th, 1931, at 3 p.m. As items of importance will be discussed it is hoped that as many members as possible will make it convenient to attend.

KATHLEEN A. SMITH, *Hon. Sec.*

THE COLLEGE OF NURSING.

The College of Nursing has sent out the following Questionnaire on "The Supply of Suitable Candidates for the Nursing Profession and Unemployment amongst Nurses." It is addressed to private nursing associations, co-operations and nursing homes, but apparently not to the large Nurse-Training Schools which run a private nursing department—a practice which cuts right at the root of the unemployment of private nurses—as the majority of the hospitals charge lower fees than that for which independent nurses can afford to work.

QUESTIONNAIRE.

- Private nursing associations, co-operations and nursing homes.
- Name
- Number (approx.) of nurses on staff.....
1. Have you any difficulty in procuring an adequate supply of general trained registered nurses?
 2. If so, can you give any reason?
 3. Do you employ any untrained or partly trained nurses?
 4. Is there sufficient employment for your private nurses?
 5. If not, which, in your experience, is the slack period of the year?
 6. How many weeks per year, on an average, are your private nurses unemployed owing to lack of work?
 7. Are you personally aware of much unemployment amongst trained private nurses?
 8. If so, do you consider that it is due to any of the following causes:—
 - (a) Age
 - (b) Ill health
 - (c) Temperament
 - (d) Periodical slack seasons
 9. Do your nurses contribute to the National Health Insurance?
- Signature

THE AMERICAN NURSES' ASSOCIATION.

In the January Bulletin of the American Nurses' Association, New Year's Greetings in the kindest terms are scattered around. Nurses are advised to "Stay Home." That is, not to move from place to place in hope of obtaining work which is very scarce.

Unemployment—the Chronic Condition.

The present acute phase of unemployment in the private duty field is only a peak in a chronic condition which has been apparent for the past several years, stated Janet M. Geister, Headquarters' Director of the American Nurses' Association, in an article in the December mid-monthly issue of the *Survey*. She wrote, "Nursing has been faced for some years with the possibility of unemployment because of the unorganised, free-lance methods of private duty, and because of the large number of student nurses being graduated annually from our more than 2,000 training schools."

The unpredictable quality of sickness is a major cause in nurse unemployment, Miss Geister stated. "Sickness in the individual is unpredictable. We may not need a nurse once in ten years, but when we need her, we want her without a moment's delay. In this respect the nurse resembles the fire department which must hold itself ready day and night against the time when a spark from the hearth sets afire our living room rug. But there is one notable difference, for whereas the fireman is paid equally for his service and for that inactivity which represents his availability, the nurse herself must suffer the loss of income incurred in her periods of waiting." Oversupply in the private duty field was cited as the second cause of nurse unemployment and the failure of nursing to adjust to changed conditions in sickness and in modern living, was given as the third reason.

Nursing is aware of these facts and is taking clear and carefully considered steps in the matter, Miss Geister stated. Before the cure, the cause of the trouble must be found, and she described how nurses have spent more than \$96,000 during the past four years in a self-survey through the Committee on the Grading of Nursing Schools. She told also of the studies being conducted at Headquarters in the use of graduate service (a) in short-period nursing service adjusted to modern conditions of sickness, and (b) of the developed opportunities for the private duty nurse through the expansion of graduate floor service in the hospitals.

MENTAL HOSPITAL AND INSTITUTIONAL WORKERS' UNION.

Notice is given by the National Asylum Workers' Union that on and after January 1st, 1931, the name of the National Asylum Workers' Union will be altered to "The Mental Hospital and Institutional Workers' Union." The Head Office will continue to be at 1, Rushford Avenue, Levenshulme, Manchester. The new badge (necessitated by the changed title of the Union) can now be supplied to members, price 2s. This Emblem is most attractively carried out in solid silver. A circle enamelled blue with silver rims surmounted by a silver cross. There is no lettering on the front of badge, but the letters M.H.I.W.U. are on the reverse side.

We learn that the Nurses in Holland strongly disapprove of the policy of the National Asylum Workers' Union in voting to set up an examination outside the authority of the General Nursing Council for England and Wales. They consider it a very reactionary policy—as we do, and they have read with interest our comments on the situation.

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