

ST. MARY'S HOSPITAL NURSES' LEAGUE.

We learn from members of the St. Mary's Hospital Nurses' League that it has been increasingly evident that a re-drafting of the regulations would be advantageous to all concerned, restricting membership to qualified nurses only, for as originally constituted the League was open to nurses in training.

The Constitution has now been revised, and Bye-laws approved.

CHARING CROSS HOSPITAL NURSES' LEAGUE.

We learn with pleasure that a League of Charing Cross Hospital Nurses is now being formed. All nurses trained at the Hospital, or who have completed three years of service in the Hospital, are eligible to join. Further particulars may be obtained from the Matron, Miss M. S. Cochrane, R.R.C., Charing Cross Hospital, London, W.C.

THE SCOTTISH NURSES' ASSOCIATION.

The Annual Meeting of The Scottish Nurses' Association was held at The Nurses' Club, 203, Bath Street, Glasgow, on Saturday, January 30th. The President Mrs. Strong was in the chair. After the business of the meeting was concluded, Miss Edmondson, R.R.C., Superintendent Matron of the Aberdeen Royal Infirmary, gave a most interesting Address on the training of nurses.

University Training for Nurses.

Miss Edmondson condemned the present method of instructing nurses for their life work, and said she was glad of the opportunity of meeting Mrs. Strong, a pioneer in the fight for registration, and also to have an opportunity of furthering a cause she herself had very much at heart. Registration was only one step, and she pitied the probationer, who came to hospital ill-prepared to assimilate the knowledge that worried Matrons and Sister-Tutors attempted to cram her with in the first year. The result was a confusion of mind, a mental indigestion, which persisted. We wanted in our profession women of education and culture and had to be content with candidates to whom anatomy, physiology, Latin, were unknown. Why should the whole teaching of the Nurses be paid by the supporters of the hospital, each one separately too? Would it not be infinitely better for the hospitals to combine, and surely the universities could help as with medical students?

"Probationers" should become "students" in hospital, after passing university examinations in anatomy, physiology, hygiene, ethics and History of Nursing, as a basis for their practical work. Domestic work should be reduced to a minimum, and more trained nurses employed. It distressed her to have our sick people nursed by inexperienced probationers as the present system enforced, but she would follow America in not paying these student nurses.

The training ended, however, the payment of the nurse should be more in proportion to her responsibilities than now. The hospital nurse, Miss Edmondson thought did not suffer such injustice as the Welfare Nurses, Health Visitors, and others living out. £200 per annum for these ought to be a minimum, and £250 was not too much.

The President warmly endorsed Miss Edmondson's contentions, but reminded nurses, from the experience of one born in 1843, that character was what counted, and that could be won only by a constant fight with self, feeding the mind by pure and noble literature, and by drawing on the Source of all strength.

She called for a vote of thanks to Miss Edmondson which was cordially given and Miss Brodie in proposing a vote of thanks to Mrs. Strong for presiding reminded her hearers that Mrs. Strong herself was the first to attempt to give nurses such a Course as had been suggested when in the eighties she started a Preliminary College Course for nurses of the Glasgow Royal Infirmary.

Tea was served in the drawing room when a pleasant social hour was spent.

AN INOPPORTUNE MOMENT.

In our last issue we published a statement of fact that upon the recommendation of the Central Public Health Committee the London County Council had agreed that "a substantial acceleration on the salary of the Matron-in-Chief was justified" and that it should be increased to £950 a year.

We observed "this means that the Matron-in-Chief is to receive a rise of salary from last October of £100 instead of the £50 according to contract."

We congratulated Miss Bannon on the appreciation of her work by the London County Council, but expressed the opinion that the moment was inopportune for public bodies to increase the salaries of the higher officials when conditions press so hardly upon those of lower grades on the nursing staff of the L.C.C., and continued:—

"It is only a few weeks ago since, as requested by the L.C.C., the Matrons of Municipal hospitals invited the members of the nursing staff to voluntarily agree to a rebate of two-and-a-half to five per cent. on their salaries, which they patriotically consented to do. The next gesture should come from the Matron-in-Chief.

"We believe it would remove the keen sense of injustice which this proposal has aroused amongst many of her subordinates if she announced forthwith her intention to refuse additional salary until such time as the nursing rank and file have restored to them the by no means excessive rates of remuneration which are their due."

In reference to this expression of opinion we have received the following letter from Sir Frederick Menzies, Medical Officer of Health and School Medical Officer to the London County Council:—

London County Council,
Public Health Department,
The County Hall,
Westminster Bridge, S.E.1.
February 9th, 1932.

MADAM,—My attention has been drawn to a paragraph on page 33 of your issue for the month of February, relating to a decision of the London County Council to accelerate the salary of the Matron-in-Chief, Miss Bannon, to £950 per annum as from and including October 1st, 1931.

In this paragraph there is a suggestion that inasmuch as "the Council requested the Matrons of its Hospitals to invite the members of the Nursing Staff voluntarily to agree to a rebate of 2½ per cent. to 5 per cent. on their salaries, which they patriotically consented to do, the next gesture should come from the Matron-in-Chief."

In order to remove any misunderstanding which may arise in the minds of your readers owing to the grossly unfair manner in which reference is made to Miss Bannon, I think it advisable to make it quite clear that Miss Bannon voluntarily agreed, even before any suggestion of a similar kind was made to the Council's Nursing Staff, to accept a cut in her own salary which, in fact, amounts to a higher percentage than that in the case of the Council's Nursing Staff generally, *viz.*, 2½ per cent. on the first £250, 5 per cent. on the next £250, 7½ per cent. on the next £250, and 10 per cent. on all salary received in excess of £750 per annum, including, of course, the additional amount arising from the recent acceleration of her salary.

In these circumstances, it seems to me that if anyone has a right to feel what you describe as "a keen sense of injustice," it is Miss Bannon, whose position has been

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