

the title "Pity the Poor Probationary Nurse!" with subtitles, "Life of Slavery in Big Hospitals," "Everything to Scrub but Floors," "Drastic Reforms Needed," "Often Hungry," etc. This reporter quotes the Editor of *The Nursing Times*, the official organ of the College of Nursing, for his serious indictment of the Nurse-Training Schools, who was reported to have stated she was strongly in favour of the contention of Dr. W. Langdon Brown, of Cambridge, "that the present system of training nurses is due for drastic reform," made in support of splitting the Preliminary Examination, which has twice been turned down by the General Nursing Council for England and Wales by the elected professional representatives on the G.N.C.

The Editor of *The Nursing Times* repudiates responsibility for this attack on the Training Schools, but unfortunately the College organ has not supported the opposition to the demand of *The Lancet* for the split preliminary examination, in spite of the fact that the large majority of the professional members of its Governing Council disapprove of the claim of Headmistresses of Secondary and other girls' schools, to select and prepare for examination young girls for entrance to the Nursing Profession.

*The Times* has inserted the valuable memorandum to the General Nursing Council on the Preliminary Education of Nurses, from Leeds, and a criticism of it by Dr. W. Langdon Brown, who considers the Association of Headmistresses, "although outside the nursing profession, may well claim to be able to judge of the capacity of selected girls in the higher forms of the secondary schools to study anatomy, physiology, and elementary hygiene, and they are also fully acquainted with the qualifications of their science mistresses to give the necessary teaching."

This claim we Registered Nurses deny, if substituted for professional instruction, and we invite Dr. Langdon Brown to say if he considers the Headmasters and Mistresses of Secondary Schools are qualified to select, teach and examine students in the same sciences for the profession of Medicine, preparatory to entering the Medical Schools?

#### WHO WILL PAY?

None of these advocates touch on the question of finance.

Either the unfortunate taxpayer must pay for the additional teaching in Secondary Schools and the examination of these purely theoretical students—or the *General Nursing Council* will be called upon to do so.

This is a question of fundamental importance, and the advocates of this unprofessional curriculum should at once, and without any ambiguity, give an unequivocal reply to the question, Who is going to pay? The taxpayer or the Registered Nurses?

### THE TRAINING OF PROBATIONER NURSES.

The following letter addressed to *The Times* by Dame Maud McCarthy appeared on January 30th last, and will, we feel sure, receive the warm approval it deserves from her colleagues throughout the world, who owe her thanks for such a sound expression of opinion:—

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE TIMES."

SIR,—I have recently read with considerable interest and some concern, certain articles appearing in the Press regarding our methods of training probationer nurses in our hospital training schools to-day. These articles criticise our present methods and recommend drastic reforms, some of which, if adopted, might be helpful; others are impracticable, and many might even do far-reaching harm to the cause they think to help, and must inevitably make the problem more difficult for those who are struggling to maintain the integrity of the profession. This with the knowledge that the nursing service of the

country and the Empire should be trained, as are its fighting forces, to endure and to "carry on" in any catastrophe that may befall—war, famine, disease. Can this fortitude be attained by the probationer who is attracted only by the luxury and the days-off advertised by the individual training school or advocated by the public? Would not that very public be the first in a crisis to criticise the result of such training as it now appears to inculcate?

During the Great War it was my experience, in dealing with fully trained nurses belonging to all training schools, not only in this country but throughout the Empire and America, that, disciplined in the old régime and on that training now so drastically criticised, they one and all displayed a magnificent spirit of courage and endurance. Hence I feel I cannot keep silence when I read the deplorable criticisms of the Press to-day of the training which produced that magnificent body of women.

We nurses, citizens, trained for, and working in, the service of our country, surely have not forgotten for what we stand; nor will we be content to let such statements pass unchallenged. We cannot risk losing our heritage—the heritage for which those great pioneers fought before our time, and which devoted and highly trained women have jealously guarded, steadily building upon that sure foundation to achieve, step by step, the improved conditions which exist to-day. Much has yet to be done, but credit surely must be given for the steady growth in the work which has placed the profession of nursing in the honourable position which it now holds. Surely we can with confidence leave the training of future probationers in the hands of those wise and devoted councillors who, in their turn, are striving to maintain the honour of their profession at its height.

I would close by saying that in my own experience of many years I have received in every stage of my training and professional career only courtesy and a sympathetic understanding from those in authority under whom I have worked, and it is difficult to believe that that courtesy and sympathy are now withheld.

Yours faithfully,

MAUD MCCARTHY, Matron-in-Chief, Q.A.I.M.N.S.,  
1914-1919.

47, Markham Square, S.W.3.

### GENERAL NURSING COUNCIL FOR SCOTLAND.

Sir John Lorne MacLeod, G.B.E., LL.D., Chairman of the Council, occupied the Chair at its Meeting held at 18, Melville Street, Edinburgh, on January 19th, 1934, and 13 Members of the Council were present.

Sir John Lorne MacLeod, G.B.E., LL.D., was unanimously re-elected Chairman, and Colonel D. J. Mackintosh, C.B., M.V.O., was unanimously re-elected Vice-Chairman for the year. The usual Committees were also appointed.

On a report of the Education and Examination Committee, arrangements were approved in regard to the Examinations in February.

A draft of the Annual Report to the Department of Health for Scotland was gone over and approved, and it was remitted to the Chairman and Vice-Chairman to sign the Report on behalf of the Council. There was also submitted a Statement of Receipts and Payments prepared by the Auditor appointed by the Department of Health and having his docket thereon.

The Council considered a fresh draft of the proposed amendment to the Rules to provide for the splitting of the Preliminary Examination into two parts and after discussion adopted a draft amendment to the Rules by adding after Rule 22 (C) the following new Rule 22 (D):—

The prescribed Preliminary Examination shall be set on the subjects contained in the Council's Syllabuses as applicable to

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