

OPENING OF THE WINTER SESSION.

THE UPLIFT OF MENTAL NURSING.

In an atmosphere of enthusiasm, the Opening of the Winter Session of the British College of Nurses took place on Friday, November 1st, at the British College of Nurses, 39, Portland Place, W., when Fellows, Members and Guests were received in the Council Chamber by the President and a number of Councillors past and present in their beautiful Robes of Office, who specially welcomed Miss Nan Dorsey and a group of Nightingale Students. A bright fire in the entrance Hall struck a welcoming note, and drew forth the perfume of the delicate pink Ophelia roses with which it was decorated.

Tea was served in the Secretary's Office, a bower of chrysanthemums and autumn foliage, and it was good to note that pioneers appeared younger and more gay than ever, and full of happiness in meeting old friends.

The President pointed out "treasures" to newcomers—The complete file of the "B.J.N." since 1888; the complete file (unique) of the organ in the past of the R.B.N.A.; the first edition, inscribed, of "Nutting and Dock"; the sixteenth-century Bible in its "William and Mary" box; the lovely "Book of Remembrance" in which the names of Fellows and Members are inscribed when they have passed on to "pastures new." The Board Room on the Second Floor was visited by many. Here, it was explained, the clerical work of the National Council of Nurses and its International relations are carried on—and what are known as the "images"—pottery statuettes of Miss Nightingale and many Royal Persons, together with other Mementoes in connection with Miss Nightingale's work and the Crimean War, were on view. Only a fleeting glance was possible, as at five o'clock all were in the Bedford Fenwick Hall, where more roses made sweet the air.

The President took the Chair, and announced with regret the absence of Miss Macaulay, Matron of the Kent County Mental Hospital, who was to have presided, but was unable to do so.

On rising, the President said that at the Opening of the Winter Session it was the custom to deal with some question of an educational value. At the present time considerable interest was being taken in the uplift of mental nursing, and the Council thought it would interest those present on this occasion to have presented to them a brief digest of the Annual Report of the Board of Control on Lunacy and Mental Deficiency, Part I, which had recently been published.

Miss Isabel Macdonald then presented the Address, which had been prepared by Miss M. Breay, and emphasised the importance of early treatment of disease of the brain, and the need for the provision of the highest type of nurse for the care of such cases, it deprecated the selection of applicants considered too young for general hospitals as probationers in mental hospitals. She then dealt with the Report of the Board of Control, a most sympathetic document showing convincingly how much can be done to improve the conditions and secure greater happiness for patients in Mental Hospitals, the value and importance of the ministrations of the Chaplains, of occupation therapy, of the effective arrangement of ward gardens, and of the psychological value of encouraging women patients to take a proper and natural pride in their appearance.

The advantage of the recognition of Training Schools for Mental Nurses was also expressed by the Board.

The Address pointed out the importance of the training of probationers in Mental Hospitals being conducted in accordance with the Syllabus of the General Nursing Council for England and Wales, giving reasons for this opinion.

RESOLUTION.

At the conclusion of the Address the following Resolution was carried unanimously, and it was resolved that it should be sent to the Chairman of the Board of Control.

That every Probationer who enters a Mental Hospital under a Public Authority for training should have the right to be prepared for the Examination of the General Nursing Council for England and Wales in Mental Nursing, the only Examination held in conformity with the provisions of the Nurses' Registration Act (1919) under which successful candidates have the right to the protected title of Registered Mental Nurse, thereby obtaining legal status.

Votes of thanks were proposed to Miss Macdonald and the Chair and accorded with warm applause.

Prints of prehistoric conditions in institutions for the mentally sick were handed round, and books and documents of historic value on the progress from night to day in the treatment of those suffering from brain diseases were on view.

Alas, time is always too limited for guests to study the documents collected together at the British College of Nurses, largely due to the devotion and generosity of Miss A. M. Bushby, its nurse historian. Everyone present appeared to have listened to the Address with interest and sympathy, and said good-bye, looking forward to meeting on "Registration Day" in December.

THE PRINCESS MARY'S ROYAL AIR FORCE NURSING SERVICE.

The following Orders have been promulgated by Command of the Air Council.

PERSONNEL:

Pay, etc., of the Princess Mary's Royal Air Force Nursing Service:

1. The Air Council have had under review the conditions of service, pay and other emoluments of members of the Princess Mary's Royal Air Force Nursing Service, and after detailed investigation and careful consideration have decided to introduce the following revised scales and conditions which will be applicable to existing and future members.

2. Promotion.—(i) An examination has been made of the appointments appropriate to the grades of senior sister and matron and it has been decided to increase the number of substantive appointments in those grades to 19. By this means a more generous outlet is provided from the grade of sister, with consequential increased prospects of promotion.

(ii) Provided that a member is duly certified as in all respects suitable for the higher rank, promotion to sister will be after one year's service on full pay. Existing staff nurses who are already qualified for promotion under the new regulation will be promoted to sister with effect from 1st August, 1935.

(iii) Promotion to the ranks of matron and senior sister will be by selection within establishment.

3. With effect from August 1st, 1935, the rates of pay, charge pay and board and washing allowance are revised as follows:—

(i) Pay.

	Present rates per annum.			New rates per annum.		
	Initial rate.	Increments.	Maximum rate.	Initial rate.	Increments.	Maximum rate.
Staff nurse	£ 65	£ 2½	£ 70	£ 80	—	—
Sister ...	75	5*	110	85	5	125
Senior sister	110	5*	120	130	5	140
Matron ...	130	10	200	160	12½	250

* Biennially.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)