

20, Portland Place,
London, W.1.
4th August, 1936.

DEAR MADAM,

NURSING OF THE CHRONIC SICK.

Having been approached by the Joint Committee of the County Councils' Association and the Association of Municipal Corporations in regard to the nursing of the Chronic Sick, I am desirous of obtaining the views of the Nursing Profession on this important question.

It has been suggested that a special grade of nurses be established to undertake this work and, as you are aware, a Scheme has already been inaugurated by the Essex County Council for the training of Assistant Nurses.

In another quarter it has been suggested that such special nurses should be designated "Attendants for the Chronic Sick."

It should be borne in mind that the Institutions which would be concerned in the training for this special grade are those for the chronic sick, the aged, and the infirm, which do not give any experience in acute or curative work and are therefore unsuitable for the training of Nurses for the Sick.

The question of the setting up of a grade of nurses in which the training would be of an inferior standard is a matter of great importance to the Nursing Profession, and the danger of competition with the trained nurse cannot be ignored. It is necessary therefore that the Professional Organisations should give the matter full consideration in order that an expression of opinion may be obtained:—

(a) as to whether the Nursing Profession is in favour, or is not in favour, of the establishment of a special grade of nurses for the Chronic Sick, and

(b) if in favour of such a grade, under what Authority should the training be carried out.

Under the Nurses' Registration Act, 1919, the General Nursing Council is required to maintain a Register of Nurses for the Sick, which consists of the following parts:—

(a) a general part containing the names of all nurses who satisfy the conditions of admission to that part of the Register;

(b) a supplementary part containing the names of male nurses;

(c) a supplementary part containing the names of nurses trained in the nursing and care of persons suffering from mental diseases;

(d) a supplementary part containing the names of nurses trained in the nursing of sick children;

(e) any other prescribed part (under which part the Fever Nurses' Register has been established).

It should be noted that nurses admitted to the Supplementary Parts are not nurses of a lower standard of General training, but are those who are fully trained in some Special branch.

As the Act stands at present, it does not appear that the General Nursing Council has authority to set up a grade such as is suggested. It is admitted that entrants to this grade would be largely those who are unable to pass the Preliminary State Examination. Under the regulations of the General Nursing Council this Examination must be taken for entry to any part of the Register and is regarded as the one Portal Entrance to the Profession.

The nursing of the Chronic Sick is being very successfully carried out in some localities by non-resident trained nurses (some trained in special branches only) who work under the direction of a fully qualified Sister, and this would appear to be the ideal method, but at the present time there is difficulty in obtaining a sufficient number of trained nurses to undertake the work.

Would you be so good as to place this matter before the members of your Association for their consideration, and be prepared to send two delegates (registered nurses) to a meeting, to which I propose to invite representatives of the Nursing Profession, in or about November at a date to be fixed later on.

Yours faithfully,

E. M. MUSSON.

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

After an interesting discussion on this very important subject—the Nursing of the Chronic Sick—it was agreed

to accept Miss Musson's invitation and that Miss M. Breay, and Miss M. S. Cochrane, R.R.C., Vice-Presidents, should attend the meeting to be arranged in November by the General Nursing Council as representatives of the British College of Nurses, with instructions on the basic principles involved.

Several letters received and discussed on correspondence in the public Press *re* "Hours of Nurses," protesting against exaggerated statements on nursing conditions in hospitals and the strain of theoretical education. The President pointed out that lack of discipline in the home and a faulty system of education in public schools were largely responsible for such failures as occurred in hospital life.

Letters from:—

Miss L. Liptrot, F.B.C.N., asking for information *re* the training in General or Mental Nursing for Male Nurses. Reply sent, sending G.N.C. booklet on the subject.

Miss M. V. Anderson, M.B.C.N., asking if State Registered Male Nurses are admitted as members of the British College of Nurses. She had been asked this question and could see no reason why they should be excluded and would be glad to know if there are any male nurses members of the College. It was agreed to inform Miss Anderson that the Constitution of the British College of Nurses only admits to membership those who are Registered Women Nurses.

Letter of thanks from Miss Jane Bell for Nightingale Brick, presented by the President and Council to the Royal Melbourne Hospital, Australia, to be incorporated in the new Nurses' Home.

Letter from Miss Gladys Stephenson, Hankow, giving first-hand information on questions of vital importance to nurses in China and Manchuria.

Letters from Fellows and Members in many parts of the world, hoping to attend the Congress in London next year.

Letters of gratitude for Diplomas received.

Letters of thanks for monthly copy of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING. "Keeps me in touch with home." "Read it from cover to cover, even the advertisements." "Could not live without my B.J.N." etc.

Many letters of a business character were received and answered.

THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN OF GREAT BRITAIN.

A Report was presented *re* the "Status of Women Memorandum" to be forwarded to the Government by the National Council of Women, which Memorandum had received the support of the British College of Nurses.

CONFIRMATION OF APPOINTMENT OF MISS D. WARREN, D.N.

The President explained that there was a vacancy for a third Member on the Council. That Miss Dorothy de M. Warren, D.N., M.B.C.N., be appointed a Member of the Council to fill the vacancy was proposed by Miss Isabel Macdonald, seconded by Miss M. S. Cochrane, R.R.C., and carried unanimously.

ELECTION OF FELLOWS AND MEMBERS.

Applications for Fellowship and Membership were received and all were elected.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT.

The President presented the Financial Statement for the month.

HISTORY OF NURSING SECTION.

Miss A. M. Bushby, Chairman of the History of Nursing Section, reported that since the last meeting she had been able to obtain two letters from Miss Nightingale written to Miss Shutt from Embley, one only signed "Florence" and the other "F.N." No date, only day of the week, but they were written about her old Nurse, Mrs. Gale, who died in 1845. Also photograph snapshot taken at Embley by the family bailiff, the other lady believed to be Lady Joan Verney, but she was enquiring into the matter.

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