

THE BRITISH COLLEGE OF NURSES.

REPORT OF THE COUNCIL MEETING.

The monthly Meeting of the Council of the British College of Nurses was held at 39, Portland Place, London, W.1, on Saturday, October 24th, at 2.30 p.m.

The President, Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, was in the Chair, and there were present, Miss M. Breay and Miss M. S. Cochrane, R.R.C., Vice-Presidents; Miss A. M. Bushby, Miss F. M. Campbell, Miss E. L. Macaulay, O.B.E., R.R.C., Miss I. Macdonald, Miss G. Le Geyt, Fellows; and Miss E. F. Eburah and Miss D. De M. Warren, D.N., Members.

Prayers having been read by the Secretary, the Minutes of the last Meeting were confirmed.

BUSINESS ARISING.

Re THE CHRONIC SICK.—The President pointed out that in connection with the present controversy of how to deal with the nursing of the Chronic Sick, any action which would depreciate the status of Registered General Nurses would be most inadvisable and a breach of contract with the highly qualified nurses so registered. The suggestion to set up a grade of nurses in which the training would be of an inferior standard and to register them as qualified to care for the "Chronic Sick," would lead inevitably to competition with the fully qualified nurse. The Supplementary Parts of the Register dealt with specialists trained in their own speciality—but the chronic sick suffered from general diseases or their results, and required the services of generally trained nurses. The Government, through public authorities, were responsible for the provision of efficient nursing of the sick poor, and that it was not available was largely an economic question. Huge expenditure was available for Government administration—of the making of Ministers there was no end—foreign affairs and other distractions. Why, therefore, starve the Nursing Service of the poor? Money was urgently needed for a more liberal supply of nurses; every general municipal hospital should have its chronic wards, which contained good material on which to develop the humanitarian qualities of its nurses—the inspiration of all good nursing.

Miss Macdonald emphasised the very serious injury which highly qualified nurses would inevitably suffer if an inferior grade of nurses for chronic cases were authorised by the General Nursing Council. The chronic sick in all classes required the very best nursing, and means must be found to protect the poor, without injury to the highly qualified nurses in private practice.

Miss M. Breay and Miss M. S. Cochrane had been deputed to attend the meeting to be called by Miss Musson to consider the question—and realised that the Council was unanimously opposed to setting up an inferior grade of nurses for the poor chronic sick, under the authority of the General Nursing Council—which had no authority under the Nurses' Registration Act to set up a grade such as is suggested by certain public authorities.

Provision to meet the need must be otherwise organised.

As this important subject was to be discussed at the Opening Session of the College on November 3rd, it was agreed that persons interested in the matter might be invited to attend.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Letter from Mr. W. Girling Ball, F.R.C.S., Dean of the Medical College of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, West Smithfield, E.C.1, stating that the College Committee has much pleasure in granting permission to show a class of 12 nurses round the Medical College in Charterhouse Square. Date to be arranged. First Tuesday or Thursday in February, 1937, suggested.

Letter from Miss L. Mason, F.B.C.N., asking if it is possible to have the loan of Anatomy and Physiology

Charts from the College as she has an evening class. It was agreed that the necessary Charts be lent to Miss Mason.

Letter from Miss E. Mackenzie, F.B.C.N., sending £1 1s. donation to the College Florence Nightingale Scholarships Fund.

Letter from Miss B. Bell, M.B.C.N., Superintendent, McKellar General Hospital, Fort William, Ontario, stating that she is considering attending the I.C.N. Congress next year, and asking if it would be possible for one of her staff to have the opportunity of "observing" in some of the Operating Rooms in the London Hospitals. Miss M. S. Cochrane, R.R.C., Vice-President, Matron, Charing Cross Hospital, kindly consented to arrange such observation, and it was decided to inform Miss Bell that this request can be granted.

Letter from Miss B. West, M.B.C.N., expressing thanks from the Executive Committee of the Infectious Hospitals Matrons' Association for the use of room for Meeting, and regretting that the President of the British College of Nurses was unable to be present at the First Annual Dinner of the Association.

Letter from Miss Spencer-Jones, F.B.C.N., of thanks for information sent concerning particulars of charges for treatment at the Woodhall Spa, Lincolnshire.

Letter from Miss M. Drakard, Hon. Secretary, League of Fever Nurses, asking if the League may hold its General Meeting at the College again this year.

Consent was given with pleasure.

SISTER DORA.—(a) Letter from Mr. P. H. Thomas, Mayor's Secretary, Walsall, regretting that an original letter, which they had in their possession, written by Florence Nightingale, has been lost, and kindly sending cutting of it which appeared in the *Walsall Observer* of 10th inst., under the heading of "Fifty Years Ago," in which Miss Nightingale expressed her regret that, owing to advanced age and infirmity, she could not accept the honour of unveiling the Statue of Sister Dora.

(b) A cutting of the following extract from *Express and Star and Birmingham and Evening Express*, Wolverhampton, Monday, October 12th, 1936:—

"SISTER DORA'S STATUE.

"Fifty years ago yesterday, on October 11th, 1886, was unveiled on The Bridge, Walsall, the 7 ft. 10 in. high white marble statue of Sister Dora.

"Although of Yorkshire birth, Dorothy Wyndlow Pattison earned fame as Walsall's Sister Dora. In 1852, when she was 20, she heard of the work of the Midlands' other great Samaritan, Florence Nightingale, who was born near Derby; but her father would not let her go to the Crimea. Eventually she joined the Sisterhood of the Good Samaritan and came to help at their little hospital in Walsall in 1865.

"Walsall persecuted her, because they thought in their Protestant narrowness that she worshipped a statue of the Virgin Mary. Actually she was a daughter of a rector in the Yorkshire village of Hauxwell. Her work of mercy is represented in the relief plate round the foot of the statue, which was believed to be the first ever erected in the country to a woman not of Royal birth.

"She fought a smallpox epidemic in the town and worked almost unceasingly for five months. Some years later she distinguished herself by her devotion to many men badly burned in a Birchills ironworks explosion. Other memorials in the town to this pioneer of nursing are a stained glass window in the Parish Church, a full-length portrait in the hospital boardroom, and a convalescent fund administered by the hospital committee."

It was agreed that a letter of thanks be sent to Mr. P. H. Thomas for these very interesting documents, which would be placed in the Sister Dora collection of the History Section of the College.

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