

to the British Medical Association expressing its unanimous indignation of the suggested degradation of Registered Nurses embodied in the Interim Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Nursing Services, that State recognition be given to a Roll of second grade nurses, to be placed under the control of the General Nursing Council for England and Wales, the Governing Body of the Nursing Profession.

My Council notes with satisfaction that the British Medical Association in its Memorandum submitted to the Inter-Departmental Committee on Nursing Services considered that "The Nursing Assistant should not be formally enrolled or admitted to any form of State Registration," disapproves of the recognition of such a Roll by the State, and ventures to ask that the British Medical Association would use its great influence to oppose any amendment of the Nurses' Registration Act of 1919 which would involve this proposed breach of contract with nurses now on the Register, who by their keen sense of public duty have financed the authority of the General Nursing Council for nineteen years, and have attained to honourable status in the body politic.—I am, dear Sir,

Yours faithfully,

ALICE STEWART BRYSON, Secretary.

The Secretary replied that he will place the Protest before the Committee of the Association.

The Leaflet published of the Report of the "Meeting of Protest" held at Caxton Hall by the Royal British Nurses' Association on March 21st has been sent to:—

- (a) All Members of the House of Lords (753 copies).
- (b) All Members of the House of Commons.
- (c) Members of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Nursing Services.
- (d) The General Nursing Council for England and Wales.
- (e) 200 Matrons of General Hospitals.

As directed by the Council at its last Meeting letters have been sent to the two Medical Peers, Lord Dawson of Penn and Lord Horder, concerning the degradation of the State Register by the Recommendation of the Interim Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Nursing Services that a Roll of second grade nurses shall be recognised by the State and compiled and controlled by the General Nursing Council for England and Wales, the Governing Body of the Nursing Profession under the Nurses' Registration Act of 1919.

The President reported that on Tuesday, 18th inst., the Interim Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Nursing Services came up for discussion in the House of Commons, when she, accompanied by members of the College, were present to hear the debate.

The President, in giving a short résumé of the speeches, delivered in the course of the debate, said that Mrs. Tate, Member for Frome, Somerset, was the only Member present who in her speech had shown sympathetic understanding of the injurious Recommendations proposed in the Interim Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Nursing Services that a Roll of second grade nurses be recognised by the State, stated in her speech:—

"The suggestion that you should register assistant nurses for general nursing I believe to be one very detrimental both to the nursing profession and to the general public. It is quite true that at the present time you have unqualified women going about with the name of nurse and nursing the sick; but because you have an unsatisfactory condition of affairs to-day, there is no excuse for having an unsatisfactory condition of affairs in the future. . . . I do not think you will improve the status of nurses by registering untrained women, and I think it is grossly unfair to the woman who has become State-registered nurse, who has given up many years of her life to that exceedingly arduous training, to find herself in competition with a woman who

is recognised as a nurse, but who has not actually completed her training. I do not think the public will be able to differentiate between the two sufficiently clearly if you accept them both for public nursing."

A LEGAL OPINION IF NECESSARY.

The President was of opinion that if, and when, the Government brought in an amending Bill to amend the Nurses' Registration Act, 1919, counsel's opinion should be sought if it included any proposal to deprive Registered Nurses of privileges enjoyed under that Act, for which they had paid, believing in the good faith of the Government. *It was agreed that a legal opinion should be sought under such circumstances.*

MERITORIOUS SERVICE.

Letters were read from Miss M. R. Angel and Miss B. A. Bowering, addressed to the President and Council, expressing their sincere appreciation of the inscribed silver tea services presented to them.

CORRESPONDENCE.

A large number of letters were received and dealt with. Amongst them a number wishing success to the College in its new headquarters and expressing warm appreciation of the arrangements. Others stating that they were following closely the activities of the Council in its struggle to protect the interests of Registered Nurses from the recommendation of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Nursing Services to legislate for and register untrained nurses, which they consider a breach of contract.

ELECTION OF FELLOWS AND MEMBERS.

Applications for membership were received and candidates were elected.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT.

The President presented the Financial Statement for the month.

THE HISTORY OF NURSING SECTION.

Miss A. M. Bushby, Chairman, expressed her regret that owing to the press of other important work in connection with the College she had been unable to submit a report this month.

The President considered that very hearty thanks were due for the excellent work rendered by voluntary workers in the present crisis, so necessary for the Registered Nurses' cause in which Miss Bushby had worked most arduously, and expressed on behalf of the Council warm appreciation; also she was sure those present would wish to extend gratitude to Miss C. Gooding, who had given valuable assistance in helping with propaganda. It was agreed to offer sincere thanks to both ladies.

THE SECRETARY'S STATEMENT.

The Secretary reported on the College activities during the past month.

646 communications had been received and 2,851 sent out. There had been 28 visitors to see the college. Petty cash spent was £11 15s.

The opening reception of the new headquarters had been a great success and had been reported in the BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN OF GREAT BRITAIN.

The Memorandum for consideration of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Nursing Services submitted by the *ad hoc* Committee appointed by the National Council of Women of Great Britain, July, 1938, was considered, and it was agreed that the report of the Meeting of Protest held at Caxton Hall on March 21st, and published by the BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING in leaflet form, be sent to the Hon. Officers of the Council of the National Council of Women of Great Britain.

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