

THE BRITISH COLLEGE OF NURSES.

COUNCIL MEETING.

A Meeting of the Council of the British College of Nurses was held at 19, Queen's Gate, London, S.W.7, on Saturday at 2.30 p.m. The President, Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, was in the Chair.

Prayers having been read, the Minutes of the last meeting were confirmed and signed.

BUSINESS ARISING.

The Interim Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Nursing Services.

As agreed at the last meeting held on May 20th, a letter (published in the last issue of the BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING) was addressed to the Rt. Honourable the Earl of Athlone, Chairman of the Inter-Departmental Committee, expressing the concern with which the Council view the recommendation to establish a Roll of partially trained nurses under the aegis of the General Nursing Council for England and Wales.

Acknowledgment of this letter was reported.

THE BRITISH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION ON THE INTERIM REPORT.

THE BRITISH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION,
Tavistock Square, W.C.1.
June 6th, 1939.

DEAR MADAM,

With reference to your letter of the 15th April last, the Association has now given consideration to the Interim Report of the Departmental Committee on Nursing Services, and notwithstanding the opinion expressed in its evidence that "Assistant Nurses" should not be formally enrolled or admitted to any form of State Register, the Association is in agreement with the recommendations of the Inter-Departmental Committee with regard to the recognition of "Assistant Nurses." In agreeing with the Inter-Departmental Committee's proposals, however, the Association attaches great importance to the recommendations that it should be an offence for any agency or co-operation acting in connection with the employment of nurses to supply for gain, for the purpose of nursing the sick, any person who is not entered on the Register or Roll or to fail to inform the applicant for the nurse's services to which of these categories the nurse supplied belongs, and the local authorities should be empowered to license, register, and inspect all such agencies and co-operations.

The Association has accordingly urged the Minister of Health that in considering any steps which shall be taken upon the recommendations of the Inter-Departmental Committee, due weight shall be given to these safeguards.

Yours sincerely,
G. C. ANDERSON,
Secretary.

The following reply has been sent :—

THE BRITISH COLLEGE OF NURSES,
19, Queen's Gate, S.W.7.
June 9th, 1939.

G. C. Anderson, Esq., M.D., LL.D.,
The Secretary, The British Medical Association.

DEAR SIR,

I beg to thank you for your letter of June 6th, which will be placed before my Council at its next Meeting.

In the meantime I am directed by the President, Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, who has worked for so many years in support of State Registration for Trained Nurses, to say that she deeply deplores the fact that the British Medical Association, so able an advocate in support of the rights and principles of the Medical Profession, has reversed the decision of the Association in connection with the Status of Registered Nurses as defined in the Memorandum placed before the Inter-Departmental Committee on Nurs-

ing Services. In the opinion of our President, the inclusion of the Assistant Nurse on a State Roll is a breach of contract with the 100,000 Registered Nurses who have conformed to the provisions of the Registration Act 1919, and financed its demands for 20 years.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
ALICE STEWART BRYSON,
Secretary.

The Council received the communication from the British Medical Association endorsing the proposal of the Inter-Departmental Committee to degrade standards of nursing, with indignant regret, as it was of opinion that this representative Association of Medical Practitioners—so alive to the benefit of protecting the legal status and high standards of medical practice, should support Registered Nurses in their fight for justice with the very ignorant employers, who largely constitute the membership of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Nursing Services.

The agreement to place highly qualified Registered Nurses under public authorities, composed as they normally are of petty tradesmen who know nothing of professional nursing, was considered an additional injury by the members of Council present, who agreed with the President that in justice to their patients the medical profession should uphold high and efficient standards of nursing, which the registration of ill-educated, semi-trained nurses will fail to do.

It was agreed to express to the British Medical Association the sense of injury with which their communication had been received.

THE GENERAL NURSING COUNCIL GOVERNS IN CAMERA.

The Council expressed strong disapproval of the fact recently made public that the conduct of the Meetings on the discussions and decision to adopt the policy of the Inter-Departmental Committee were held *in camera* by the General Nursing Council for England and Wales, and it was unanimously agreed that a communication to this effect be sent to the Council, claiming the right of the Registered Nurses to be heard in Conference before action was taken, calculated to degrade their professional and economic status, and expressing their strong objection to their offices being utilised for the organization of semi-trained persons.

THE UNJUST TREATMENT OF MATRONS.

Reports were presented in the cases of three Matron members who had been subjected to unjust treatment by various public authorities, and who had contested the attacks made upon them, with little hope of redress.

CORRESPONDENCE.

A large number of letters were reported from Fellows and Members, many of an interesting character.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT.

The President presented the Financial Statement for the month.

REPORT OF THE HISTORY OF NURSING SECTION.

A letter had been received from Miss A. M. Bushby explaining her absence on holiday, and that therefore there would be no report this month.

THE SECRETARY'S STATEMENT.

The Secretary reported on the varied activities of the College.

THE ANNUAL REPORT.

The draft of the Thirteenth Annual Report of the British College of Nurses was presented and approved for presentation at the Annual Meeting.

TO CONSIDER AN ADDITION OF TWO FELLOWS AND ONE MEMBER TO THE COUNCIL.

It was proposed by Miss Cochrane, seconded by Miss Ingman and carried unanimously that the Council of the

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