

THE GENERAL-NURSING COUNCIL FOR ENGLAND AND WALES.

A Meeting of the General Nursing Council for England and Wales was held at the offices of the Council, 23, Portland Place, London, W., on June 23rd. Dame Ellen Musson, D.B.E., R.R.C., LL.D., presided.

It was reported that the Minister of Health had forwarded a copy of a communication received from the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs ratifying the terms of the Agreement for Reciprocal Registration with Newfoundland.

CORRESPONDENCE.

It was reported that the Minister of Health has appointed Ralph M. T. Picken, Esq., M.B., D.P.H. to be a member of the Council for the period ending December 23rd, 1924, in place of Mrs. M. H. Kettle, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., deceased.

The Chairman then read letters from (1) The Royal British Nurses' Association; (2) The British College of Nurses; (3) The Association of Male Nurses.

ROYAL BRITISH NURSES' ASSOCIATION.

194, Queen's Gate,
London, S.W.7.
21st June, 1939.

The Chairman,
General Nursing Council for England and Wales,
23, Portland Place, W.1.

Madam,

At the Annual General Meeting of this Association, held on 1st instant, it was decided to convey to the General Nursing Council an expression of the strong disapprobation, of the members present, of the action taken by the Council in giving its approval to the Recommendation of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Nursing Services that a Roll of partially qualified women be established under the Nurses' Registration Act for England and Wales. The Meeting also deprecated strongly the expressed willingness of the Council to compile such a Roll.

This Association for many years promoted and supported the movement for the State Registration of Trained Nurses against much opposition from Matrons of the leading Hospitals and other influential persons. The Members of the Association, therefore, cannot but deplore the action of the General Nursing Council which is calculated to negative privileges and protection obtained through the present Act, to prove destructive to the Status of the Profession by de-grading the functions of the Act and to introduce, for Registered Nurses, a type of economic competition from which, in great measure, the provisions of their Act and its recognition of a minimum standard of qualification gave pledge of protection.

I am,
Yours faithfully,
ISABEL MACDONALD,
Secretary.

THE BRITISH COLLEGE OF NURSES,
19, Queen's Gate, S.W.7.
22nd June, 1939.

The Chairman and Members of the General Nursing Council for England and Wales.

Madam,

At a Meeting of the Council of the British College of Nurses held at 19, Queen's Gate, S.W.7, on Saturday, June 17th, it was agreed to enter a strong protest against the conduct of business by the General Nursing Council for England and Wales in that they considered *in camera* and not in open Council, the Recommendations contained in the Interim Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Nursing Services, as they refer to the State recognition, and compilation of, a Roll of Assistant Nurses, composed of untrained and semi-trained persons, unable to conform to the minimum educational standards, prescribed under the Nurses' Registration Act, 1919.

Upwards of 80,000 Registered Nurses have conformed to such standards and that under what they regarded as an honourable contract (made with them by the State, and by the body appointed to carry out the provisions of the Act) to maintain these standards.

We hold that before the General Nursing Council proceeds to compile a Roll of semi-trained nurses, calculated in our opinion to degrade the educational and economic status of Registered Nurses, the Council should consult its electorate. By evading this course through conducting its business *in camera* the Council lays itself open to well-merited censure now and in the future.

The offices at 23, Portland Place, London, W.1 (maintained as they are by the Registered Nurses) should not be available for the organisation of semi-trained competitors, without the nurses' consent. The General Nursing Council is not empowered by Parliament to assume an absolute authority in its dealings towards its electorate.

My Council claims that matters so momentous to the Registered Nurses and their profession should not be discussed and brought to a decision in secret and requests that the General Nursing Council shall call a Conference of Registered Nurses without delay, in order that the latter may express their views on a professional matter of such gravity and far-reaching importance.

In anticipation of your reply.

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

THE SOCIETY OF REGISTERED MALE NURSES.

276, Princes Avenue, Palmers Green,
London, N. 13.
16th June, 1939.

Dame Ellen Musson, D.B.E.,
Chairman,
The General Nursing Council for England and Wales,
23, Portland Place, W.1.

Madam,

We, the Society of Registered Male Nurses, learn from the current Nursing Press that the General Nursing Council is contemplating consideration of the proposal by Sir Arthur Hall, Chairman of the Sub-Committee for Mental Nursing of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Nursing Services, that a separate Register be set up for Mental Nurses, or that they be placed under a separate statutory body.

We, the Society, definitely regard this as a retrograde step and shall do all in our power to oppose the carriage into effect of the proposal.

This Society has, since its inception, fought strenuously for the status of the Registered Mental Nurse, and we regard this proposal as a definite attempt to widen yet further the existing breach between the two branches of the profession.

Mental Nurses at present on the Register of Nurses have honourably borne their share in supporting, by loyalty and contributions, the General Nursing Council.

We protest that it is totally unnecessary for the General Nursing Council to bow to the dictates of the Royal Medico-Psychological Association, and that that Association should retire from the field of examiners of nurses, or, alternatively, place itself under the ægis of the General Nursing Council.

It is our earnest hope that all future Mental Nurses will be trained and examined under the provisions of the Nurses' Registration Act, 1919.

As an alternative proposal to that of Sir Arthur Hall's we would suggest that all Supplementary Registers of Nurses be swept away, and that there should be one Register of Nurses with sections for the various branches.

I am, Madam, in loyalty and esteem,
Yours faithfully,

E. J. GLAVIN,
Secretary.

A copy of this letter is being sent to the Nursing Press.

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