

THE BRITISH COLLEGE OF NURSES.

COUNCIL MEETING.

A Meeting of the Council of the British College of Nurses was held at Headquarters, 19, Queen's Gate, London, S.W.7, on Saturday, February 18th, 1939, at 2.30 p.m.

The President, Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, was in the Chair, and several Fellows attended as visitors to consider with the Council the Interim Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Nursing Services. Prayers having been read, the Minutes of the last meeting were read and confirmed.

BUSINESS ARISING.

SYMPATHY WITH MISS A. M. BROWNLOW.

A letter received from Miss A. M. Brownlow, F.B.C.N., with reference to her professional difficulties was reported. The inquiry by the Ministry of Health was in process and she had wisely secured legal assistance.

The President felt sure they would all deeply sympathise with Miss Brownlow in the severe ordeal to which she was being subjected. Good wishes expressing admiration of her courageous attitude were sent to her.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Miss Dorothy G. Tilby drew the attention of the Council to an advertisement which had appeared in the official organ of the College of Nursing inviting applications for the Matronship of the Weymouth and District Hospital, making it compulsory for applicants to be members of the College of Nursing.

In the opinion of Miss Tilby such public positions should not be restricted to the members of any one nurses' organization; the membership of any association should be a free choice to a trained nurse, and an advertised position should be given to the most efficient applicant, irrespective of membership of any association.

The Council agreed unanimously that a letter be sent to the Chairman of the Weymouth and District Hospital, that in fairness to Registered Members of the Nursing Profession, no invidious distinctions should be made in the appointment of officers of Voluntary hospitals supported by public contributions.

Nineteen letters of thanks were received from recipients of Miss Isabel Macdonald's welcome gifts from her Calendar Fund.

A large number of letters were notified of gratitude and pleasure at the reception of the Queen's beautiful Christmas card, from India and the various Dominions; letter from Miss E. E. Ward, F.B.C.N., Matron, Mildura Hospital, Australia, conveying warm thanks for the Nightingale Brick donated from the College to be incorporated in a new wing of the nurses' home which is being planned.

Many letters from Fellows and Members wishing the College increased success in the new Headquarters, 19, Queen's Gate.

Many other communications were received.

ELECTION OF FELLOWS AND MEMBERS.

Applications for membership were received and all the applicants elected with pleasure.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT.

The President presented the Financial Statement for the past three months. The removal from 39, Portland Place had meant considerable expense, but much satisfaction had resulted, as the new house, beautifully light and airy, with ample space for all departments, could not fail to facilitate the various activities of the College. They had received a warm welcome from their near neighbour, the Royal British Nurses' Association, with whose professional policy the College is in complete sympathy.

REPORT OF THE HISTORY OF NURSING SECTION.

Miss A. M. Bushby, Chairman, reported that she had received from Miss S. A. Villiers £1, which she would use to renovate one of the Nightingale pictures.

Miss I. Macdonald had given a coloured print of St. Brigid, which was much admired.

The President thanked Miss Bushby for her work and Report.

THE SECRETARY'S STATEMENT.

The Secretary reported that since the last Meeting of the Council the removal of the College Headquarters from 39, Portland Place to 19, Queen's Gate had been accomplished satisfactorily. The Council passed a Vote of Thanks to the Staff for the strenuous work willingly rendered, and agreed that a letter expressing appreciation of the very efficient manner in which the staff of Maple & Co. employed, executed the removal of the College effects and completed the decorations of several apartments.

The effects had been removed without damage and all the beautiful china without a crack.

A Vote of Thanks to the President was proposed by Miss I. Macdonald, seconded and carried, for the gifts to the College of new furnishings of the Nurses' Club Room, also for the charming decoration of the Council and Reception Rooms and staircase, all of which were greatly admired.

THE INTERIM REPORT OF THE INTER-DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE ON NURSING SERVICES.

The Interim Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Nursing Services was considered, clause by clause. The following recommendations were approved:—

Recommendations Approved.

(1) To attract recruits in sufficient numbers the status of the profession should be improved and it should be recognised as a service of outstanding national importance, and essential reforms carried out on this basis.

(2) The salaries of nurses, particularly after they have had some years of service, are too low, and the establishment of Committees to regulate nurses' salaries on a national basis is recommended.

(3) The standard hours of work in all hospitals should be reduced to 96 per fortnight.

(4) Pensions for nurses should be universal and interchangeable between all branches of the service.

(5) Some development of the system of grants from public funds to hospitals seems necessary in order to enable hospitals to meet the cost of implementing the Committee's recommendations; but the Committee are not unanimous on the extent, source, or method of administration of these grants.

(6) The minimum age at which probationers should be recruited for work in the wards of a general hospital should be 18 years.

(7) Unreasonable rules and restrictions affecting the nurse, both when on and off duty, should be modified. Hospitals should examine their rules, in consultation with the staff, in order to revise them in the light of modern conditions.

(8) Nurses' Councils, on the lines of Whitley Councils, should be set up in all hospitals to promote the removal of grievances.

(9) In a number of hospitals, improvements are desirable in the accommodation provided for nurses, the catering for the nursing staff, the arrangements for "off-duty" times and annual leave, and the routine medical inspection of nurses. Probationers should be relieved of unnecessary domestic work. Permission to "live out" should be granted to the senior trained staff.

Recommendations Strongly Disapproved.

(1) The Council were not in favour of the split Preliminary Examination nor the exemption of candidates from the

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