

THE BRITISH COLLEGE OF NURSES.

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL.

A meeting of the Council of the British College of Nurses was held at 19, Queen's Gate, London, S.W.7, on Saturday, June 29th, 1940, 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.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Many letters were reported.

Much interest was expressed in a letter of thanks received from Captain Philip Vian, D.S.O., Commander of H.M.S. *Cossack*, in reply to a telegram of congratulation, and it was agreed that this letter, relating to an event of such historic moment, should be placed in the History Section of the College.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL.

The following communication, received from the London County Council, addressed to the President, was placed before the Council for its consideration:—

London County Council.

Council Meeting, June 25th, 1940.

Question asked by Mr. Henry Studholme.

Whether he will make a statement with regard to recent comments in a section of the Press as to the employment of a naturalised British subject in the Council's nursing service?

Reply by the Chairman of the Civil Defence and General Purposes Committee.

I am grateful to the Honourable Member for giving me an opportunity to state the full facts. The lady in question was born at Berne, Switzerland, in 1895. Her ancestors on both sides for three generations back are known to have been Swiss born. She was educated in Switzerland up to the age of eighteen. She came to England in 1914, and received her general nursing training at Guy's Hospital, and remained continuously in England until 1923. Apart from a short period as a nursing sister at the Leysin Clinic in Switzerland, she has resided permanently in England since. She became a naturalised British subject in February, 1934, shortly before entering the Council's service as Matron of Bethnal Green Hospital. She has been a principal Matron in the Public Health Department of the Council since 1935; and on May 1st, 1940, she was appointed to act temporarily as Principal Matron-in-Charge. I understand that she has only been in Germany once, travelling with three English companions on a motor tour to Austria, and has no association with Germany.

After the most careful inquiries had been made in the appropriate quarters, the Civil Defence and General Purposes Committee considered the whole matter in the light of all the facts and unanimously decided to take no action. I think I am speaking for all members of that Committee when I say that they regard the agitation as unfair and detrimental to the public interest.

After consideration of the above communication, it was unanimously agreed that a Resolution, embodying the opinion of the Council, should be forwarded to the London County Council.

RESOLUTION.

In reply to the statement presented by the Chairman of the Civil Defence and General Purposes Committee to the London County Council at its Meeting on Tuesday, June 25th, 1940, the Council of the British College of Nurses desires to record that it received, with regret, the decision of the London County Council that no action would be taken on the appointment of a naturalised alien as Principal Matron-in-Charge of its Nursing Service, as it is unanimously of opinion that the Nursing Staff of the London County Council should be under the control of a British-born Matron, especially in time of war.

The statement made by the Chairman of the Civil

Defence and General Purposes Committee that "I think I am speaking for all members of that Committee when I say that they regard the agitation as unfair and detrimental to the public interest" was strongly deprecated.

The Council of the British College of Nurses takes exception to justifiable criticism in this matter being termed "agitation," and claims, without dispute, the right of the Nursing Profession to express its opinion on matters vitally affecting the status and treatment of nurses which would not only be injurious to them but would be "unfair and detrimental to the public interest."

Moreover, the Council of the British College of Nurses claims such future liberty of action as may be necessary in the matter under discussion.

ELECTION OF FELLOWS AND MEMBERS.

Applications for membership were received, and the applicants were elected.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT.

The President presented the Financial Statement for the year, which, under war conditions, was very satisfactory.

NOMINATIONS FOR ELECTION TO THE COUNCIL.

Nominations for vacancies on the Council were received.

THE AGENDA FOR THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

It was agreed that the Annual Meeting should be held on Thursday, July 25th, at 3 p.m., at which, it is hoped, there will be a large attendance.

At the conclusion of the meeting, a Reception and Tea will be held.

Owing to the very necessary economy in paper and the increased cost of postage, *this will be the only intimation of the meeting sent to Fellows and Members.*

AGENDA.

1. The Presentation of the Annual Report.
2. The Financial Report.
3. The Appointment of Auditors.

THE ANNUAL REPORT.

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

LIST OF GIFTS.

The Chairman, General Nursing Council for England and Wales: Register of Nurses, 1940.

The General Nursing Council for Scotland: Register of Nurses, 1940.

Mrs. E. Wates, F.B.C.N.: Flowers.

THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING: "The Ear and Its Diseases," by Dr. Edgar Whitaker, late Aural Surgeon to the Palmerston North General Hospital, New Zealand; "Text-Book for Nurses—Anatomy, Physiology, Surgery and Medicine," by E. W. Hey Groves, M.D., B.Sc., M.S., F.R.C.S., and J. A. Nixon, C.M.G., M.D. (Cantab), F.R.C.P. Lond.; "Physiotherapy—Fractures and Injuries to Joints" by Olive F. Sands, C.S.M.M.G.

OTHER BUSINESS.

It was agreed that a letter expressing warm congratulations be sent to Miss Katharine H. Jones, S.R.N., on her appointment, by His Majesty the King, as Matron-in-Chief, Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service.

The meeting then terminated.

At the conclusion of the meeting, two members took the Obligation, and afterwards took tea with the Council, who had great pleasure in welcoming Miss Patt Tuckett, R.N. (Commandant of the Canadian-Polish Ambulance Unit), and Captain Sister Patricia Oakley Williams, S.R.N., F.B.C.N. (Active Commandant in France), with seven Polish nurses and friends.

All were rejoiced to see Miss Patt Tuckett restored to health after her recent serious illness, and to hear of the heroic conduct of the Unit in France.

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