

THE GENERAL NURSING COUNCIL FOR ENGLAND AND WALES.

We are informed that a meeting of the Emergency Committee of the General Nursing Council for England and Wales was held on Friday, December 15th.

Miss D. M. Smith, Vice-chairman of Council, on behalf of the Committee, congratulated Dame Ellen Musson on having been presented with the International Florence Nightingale Medal.

Arising out of the Minutes.

Town Clerk's Office,

St. Marylebone, W.1.

December 2nd, 1939.

AIR-RAID PRECAUTIONS.

DEAR SIR,

Public Shelter A. 63—23, Portland Place.

I have to thank you very much for your letter of the 30th ultimo returning (uncompleted) forms of notice of claim for compensation under the Compensation (Defence) Act, 1939, and intimating that your Council do not propose to make a claim thereunder, which is greatly appreciated.

I am requesting the Council's architect, Mr. B. L. Sutcliffe, of 5, Manchester Square, W.1, to deal with the electricity account referred to in the second paragraph of your letter, and shall be glad if you will submit the account to him.

Yours faithfully,

REGINALD GRAVES, *Town Clerk.*

The Registrar,

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

Finance.

On the recommendation of the Committee, bills and claims submitted for payment were approved, and the sums of £25 for insurance stamps, £735 for weekly salaries, and £200 for registrar's account were allowed.

Registration.

It was reported that a copy of the Register of Nurses for the year 1939 had been received from the Midwives' and Nurses' Board of Western Australia.

Applications for approval for registration were: General Register, by reciprocity, 15; Supplementary Part of the Register for Fever Nurses, by examination, 2, by reciprocity, 2. Total, 19.

It was agreed that 43 nurses who had hitherto failed to pay their retention fee, and now wished their names re-included in the Register, should be re-included.

Education and Examination.

It was agreed that, as from July 7th, 1939, the scheme of affiliation between the Birmingham Hospital for Women and the County Hospital, Lincoln, be cancelled, but without prejudice to the position and rights of nurses already admitted under the scheme.

A letter from the Board of Education was considered recommending approval of the whole time one-year's Course of Instruction at the Battersea Polytechnic for the purposes of Part I. of the Preliminary Examination.

It was agreed that the provisional approval of St. Chad's Hospital, Birmingham (complete training school); Whiston County Hospital (training school for male nurses); Runwell Hospital, Wickford (training school for mental nurses); Wilts County Mental Hospital, Devizes (training school for mental nurses); Cranage Hall, Holmes Chapel (training school for nurses for mental defectives); and Mill Hill Isolation Hospital, Huddersfield (training school for nurses for infectious diseases), be extended for a further year.

Date of the next Meeting.

A meeting of the full Council will be held on Friday, January 26th, 1940.

NURSES IN BLUNDERLAND.

THE CIVIL NURSING RESERVE.

Months ago we invited the Minister of Health to place the organisation of the Civil Nursing Reserve in the hands of Registered Nurses on the same principle that Medical Service in War had been referred to the Medical Profession, but with a studied determination to exclude efficient nursing opinion, Mr. Walter Elliot hastened to approve lay control of Civil War Nursing.

The result, of course, has been months of muddle, and, in consequence, serious risks, in our opinion, to the efficient nursing of the new Army, the flower of our young manhood.

Miscalculation as to bombs and bluster has mercifully postponed disaster, so thus late in the day reforms are to be hastily instituted in response to public protests.

We reported in our last issue that the Guild of Nurses had applied to the Minister of Health to receive a deputation of nurses to place a statement before him, and in response to this application he appointed Miss Florence Horsbrugh, Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry, to receive the deputation.

An Emergency Committee drew up a Statement of Case, signed by Miss Thora Silverthorne, S.R.N., Chairman.

DEPUTATION FROM NURSES' ORGANISATIONS.

Miss Florence Horsbrugh, Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Health, on December 12th, received a deputation representing the Guild of Nurses, the Association of Nurses, the National Federation of Nursing Associations, the British College of Nurses, and the Mental Hospital and Institutional Workers' Union.

The deputation was introduced by Mr. G. Vincent Evans, and the chief spokesmen were: Miss Thora Silverthorne, Miss M. S. Cochrane, R.R.C., Miss M. Yorke, and Mr. C. F. Comer.

They expressed their grave concern at the amount of unemployment among State registered nurses, and suggested that one of the main causes was the substitution of nursing auxiliaries from the Civil Nursing Reserve for fully-qualified nurses in hospitals coming within the emergency medical scheme of the Ministry of Health. They also drew attention to the fact that many hospitals were now enforcing residence on nurses who had previously lived outside the hospital, and that this was leading to great discontent and also to resignations. In addition they alleged that transfers to and from hospitals had been carried out in an unreasonable manner. Extension of working hours was given as another cause of unemployment.

The deputation feared that these measures would result in the professional status of the nurse being lowered, and suggested that a Committee of Nurses should be appointed to give advice from the nurse's point of view.

Replying, Miss Horsbrugh thanked the deputation for coming to state their case. The Minister of Health was particularly anxious that there should be no misunderstandings or sense of grievance among a body so important to the well-being of the nation at the present time as members of the nursing profession.

Miss Horsbrugh said that it was undoubtedly true that the preparations made to meet an expected air attack on the populous centres had caused a good deal of dislocation amongst the nursing profession. But it was not fair to lay this at the door of the Government. It was not the case that Nursing Auxiliaries were being employed to replace State registered nurses. Only 74 were employed in the whole of the hospitals in the London Sectors at the present time, and in the entire service of the London County Council there were only 32 Nursing Auxiliaries out of a total staff of 12,000.

The causes of unemployment, therefore, had to be looked

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