

Hough School for Girls, Stoke-on-Trent, and at the Mount Friends' Girls' School, York, be provisionally approved for the purposes of Part I. of the Preliminary Examination.

General Purposes.

On the recommendation of the General Purposes Committee, it was agreed that as from April 1st, 1941, and subject to the approval of the Minister of Health, a War Bonus at the rate of 6 per cent. on salaries up to £300 per annum and on the first £300 of higher salaries be paid to members of the staff with the exception of Third Division Clerks, whose salary has already been increased.

Disciplinary Case.

The case of Miss Amy Phipps, S.R.N. 179 (deferred from Council on May 24th, 1940) was considered *in camera* and it was resolved: "That the case be dismissed."

Next Meeting of the Council.

The next meeting of the Council was fixed for Friday, June 27th.

IN CAMERA.

We felt sure that, sooner or later, the constant custom of the General Nursing Council for England and Wales of going *in camera* for the consideration of disciplinary cases, and merely recording decisions, would meet with public disapprobation, and now Members of Parliament have pressed Mr. Ernest Brown, the Health Minister, to interfere in a case where the General Nursing Council has struck a nurse off the register because she was an unmarried mother, but which he has refused to do. According to the *People*, he was pressed by Dr. Edith Summerskill, Labour Member for West Fulham, and by Mr. E. Sorensen, Labour M.P. for West Leyton, to "remedy this injustice." The *People* states:—

"Parliament will soon hear much more about the matter, for M.P.s who are interested are determined to insist that there must be no secrecy in the trials of nurses by their professional council, and that they are not treated more harshly than doctors in similar circumstances.

"In the present case, the Nursing Council has refused to say whether the nurse's position arose out of an illicit association with a patient or from an incident in her private life.

"Dr. Summerskill told Mr. Brown that doctors are struck off the register only if a patient is concerned. If the 'other party' is a personal friend, the General Medical Council takes the view that there is no 'offence against the profession.' She suggests that the standard for nurses should be the same."

With the claim by Members of Parliament "that there must be no secrecy in the trials of nurses" by the General Nursing Council we are entirely in sympathy. Decisions taken *in camera* breed distrust, and indeed, we have wondered why certain forgers and thieves have received lenient treatment, and others for the same errors have been permanently removed from the Register.

In our issue of August, 1939, reporting the business of the G.N.C., all the information available concerning the trial of two unmarried mothers was as follows:—

"The cases of two nurses who had become mothers, although unmarried, were considered *in camera* by the Council, and it was agreed that their names be removed from the State Register."

In February last, under Disciplinary Cases, we reported that at its meeting on January 24, the General Nursing Council considered the case of Miss H. D. J., S.R.N., 78170.

It was reported that, being unmarried, she had given birth to a child.

Her name had been removed from the Roll of Queen's Nurses.

The Council considered the case *in camera*, and instructed the Registrar to remove the name from the Register of Nurses.

We have no doubt that the opinion of the majority of their colleagues would be in accordance with the decision of the Council, but that is not the point under discussion.

A fair and open trial of Registered Nurses, whatever the accusation may be, is the course which should be adopted by the General Nursing Council for the future, and we hope its members will not wait until compelled to concede this modicum of justice by irate public opinion.

GENERAL NURSING COUNCIL FOR SCOTLAND.

A Meeting of the General Nursing Council for Scotland was held at 5, Darnaway Street, Edinburgh, on Friday, May 23rd, 1941.

Sir John Lorne MacLeod, G.B.E., LL.D., occupied the chair.

Apologies for absence were intimated from Dr. Chalmers, Miss Husband, Miss Milnes and Miss Niccol.

Education, Examination and Registration.

Reported 14 Nurses who had passed the Final Examination and had now attained the age of 21 and had been registered since last meeting.

Reported 15 applications for re-inclusion in the Register after failure to pay the Retention Fee.

Finance.

The Report of the Finance Committee was submitted and approved and the Accounts passed for payment.

Federated Superannuation Scheme for Nurses and Hospital Officers (Contributory).

Reported that the Secretary of State had approved the adoption of the Federated Superannuation Scheme.

Date of Next Meeting.

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Council should be held on Friday, June 27th, 1941.

OBITUARY.

SIR JOSEPH PRIESTLEY, K.C.

The death of Sir Joseph Priestley, K.C., took place at his residence, Tatmore Place, Hitchin, on June 9th, and as the first Chairman of the General Nursing Council for England and Wales, he was instrumental in helping to draft the first Bye-Laws for the Administration of the Nurses' Registration Act passed in 1919. He was a courteous and kindly man, but not of sufficient force of character to insist upon liberty of conscience and action for the representatives on the Council who had promoted the Registration Movement, a progressive minority, with the result that his resignation, supported by the lay, medical, and reactionary nurse representatives, produced the historic "strike" which it was hoped would eliminate the minority. The result was quite otherwise. The minority stuck to their guns; and, after wandering in the wilderness for ten weeks, failing in their duty to the Nursing Profession, those persons who had resigned, with the Chairman, were most unjustifiably permitted by the then Minister of Health, Sir Alfred Mond, to return to office under a new Chairman, with the result, however, that the demands for which the minority had contended in justice to existing nurses, one being the record of their Certificates in the printed Register, were agreed without further opposition.

Of course, we were with the minority, but that goes without saying.

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