

## THE BRITISH COLLEGE OF NURSES.

### THE COUNCIL MEETING.

A Meeting of the Council was held on Thursday, November 6th, at 19, Queen's Gate, S.W.7.

The President, Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, was in the Chair, and there were present: Miss M. S. Cochrane, R.R.C., Vice-President; Miss A. M. Bushby, Miss A. S. Bryson, Miss E. Brodie, Fellows; and Miss Hussey and Miss McLoughlin, Members.

Prayers having been read and the Minutes confirmed, the Council proceeded to elect Miss Elizabeth Brodie, S.R.N., Matron of the Royal Mental Hospital, Glasgow, to the vacant seat on the Council for a Fellow to represent the specially expert work of Mental Nurses.

Miss Brodie expressed thanks for the honour of election, stating she had greatly enjoyed her connection with the Council when previously a member.

The President then presented a comprehensive report of the legal procedures in connection with the incorporation of the College made necessary under the Trust Deed, upon the retirement of the remaining Trustee. The Council agreed to proceed on the legal advice of the solicitor.

### Election of Fellows and Members.

The Council proceeded to elect new Fellows and Members.

### The Committee for the Protection of the Legal Status of the Registered Nurse.

A full report of the three meetings already held by "The Committee for the Protection of the Legal Status of the Registered Nurse" was presented and discussed. It was realised that there was an awakening upon the part of the rank and file of the Nursing Profession to the danger of degrading nursing efficiency by the demand by Public Bodies for the registration of the semi-trained nurse, especially in connection with the General Nursing Council for England and Wales—the Governing Body financed by Registered Nurses, under the Act of 1919. It was reported that arrangements were being made to place at an early date a considered Memorandum on the ethical and financial position of the question before women Members of Parliament. It was reported that, with their usual acumen, the Scottish Nurses are solidly opposed to the registration of the Assistant Nurse, realising as they do that such degradation of standards would inevitably decrease the supply of well educated women desirous of entering the profession of Nursing. Other business having been considered, the meeting terminated.

### THE COMMITTEE FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE LEGAL STATUS OF THE REGISTERED NURSE.

A Meeting of the above Committee was held on Thursday, December 4th, at 19, Queen's Gate, S.W.7.

Miss M. S. Cochrane, R.R.C., was in the Chair, and General, Fever, and Mental Nurses were represented.

The Chairman gave a report of the Deputation from the Committee received by Miss Irene Ward, M.P., Chairman of the Women's Committee in the House of Commons, and by Viscountess Davidson, M.P., on Tuesday, December 2nd. Eight members of the Committee attended representing organisations of general, fever and mental nurses.

Miss Cochrane read the Memorandum prepared for the information of Members of Parliament, which stated that: "The safety of the sick public of all classes, including the chronic sick, depends, under medical direction, upon the maintenance of an efficient standard of nursing, so that there shall be no imposition on rich or poor by the legal recognition of semi-trained, unskilled women."

Some of the difficulties in the way of successful recruitment for the Nursing Profession were enumerated.

It was claimed that it should be the duty of the General Nursing Council to define a basic standard of examination, oral as well as written, at the conclusion of training. Brief reference was made to the 30 years' intensive agitation for legal status for nurses—at a cost to them of £20,000—and also to the fact that since the passing of the Nurses' Registration Acts in 1919, it has cost Registered Nurses £750,000 to finance the General Nursing Council for England and Wales, and to publish the Register of Nurses containing some hundred thousand entries.

### THE ASSISTANT NURSE.

It was reported that it is now proposed to admit to a Register numbers of untrained, unskilled women known as Assistant Nurses who have failed to attain to the minimum standard required by the General Nursing Council. Valid reasons, economic and educational, were advanced for opposing the admission of these unskilled women to the Register controlled by the General Nursing Council for England and Wales, and it was contended that it would constitute a breach of contract between the Government and the Registered Nurses, who are financially responsible for administering the Act.

Both Miss Irene Ward, M.P., and Viscountess Davidson, M.P., received the deputation with the greatest courtesy, inviting information on many points.

Mrs. Bedford Fenwick placed a copy of the two imposing volumes of the Register of Nurses on the table, offering it as a gift for reference to Members of Parliament.

The majority of the members of the deputation spoke from expert points of view.

After this courteous reception, the deputation withdrew.

### An Open Meeting for Nurses.

Miss G. M. Hardy gave a short report of the proceedings of the Open Meeting for Nurses summoned by the Royal College of Nursing on Saturday, November 15th.

It was agreed to refer a Scheme for the Reconstruction of the Nursing Profession, drafted by Miss D. de M. Warren, to the Council of the College. Future action to be taken in connection with the proposed Registration of the Assistant Nurse was discussed and various suggestions received.

It was agreed that the next Meeting of the Committee be held on January 22nd next.

The Meeting then terminated and tea was served.

### THANKS FROM THE CANADIAN NURSES' ASSOCIATION.

MONTREAL, P.Q.

October 24th, 1941.

MRS. BEDFORD FENWICK, *President*,  
THE BRITISH COLLEGE OF NURSES,  
19, Queen's Gate, London, S.W.7, England.

DEAR MRS. FENWICK,

Your message of sincere regret on behalf of the British College of Nurses to the President and Members of the Canadian Nurses' Association in their loss, by death, of Miss Jean Gunn, is acknowledged with many thanks.

Those of us who were privileged to be associated with Miss Gunn now miss her inspired leadership, but we realise that throughout the future her influence will continue to be felt.

We take pride in the fact that we in Canada shared our great leader with all nurses within the International Council of Nurses.

With kind personal regards.

Yours sincerely,

JEAN S. WILSON, Reg. N.,

*Executive Secretary,*

CANADIAN NURSES' ASSOCIATION.

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