

THE GENERAL NURSING COUNCIL FOR ENGLAND AND WALES.

A meeting of the General Nursing Council for England and Wales was held at the offices of the Council, 23, Portland Place, London, W., on October 23rd. Dame Ellen Musson, D.B.E., R.R.C., LL.D., presided.

Correspondence.

The Chairman reported that the Board of Education had appointed Mr. H. M. Walters, F.A., and Miss Cathner to be their representatives on the General Nursing Council, taking office from January next, in place of the Hon. Mrs. Edwards and Miss M. A. Gwatkin, whose term of office has expired.

The Chairman reported the receipt of a letter from the Minister of Health, which was read, as follows:—

MINISTRY OF HEALTH,
WHITEHALL,
LONDON, S.W.1.
October 8th, 1942.

MADAM,

I am directed by the Minister of Health to enclose a copy of a memorandum on the Assistant Nurse and some related matter, setting out tentative conclusions for action to which the Minister has come.

The Minister would be glad to have in writing as soon as possible the views of your organisation on the proposals put forward in the memorandum. If you would also like to send representatives to discuss the memorandum he will gladly arrange for his officers to meet them.

Since the memorandum was drafted, the Minister has received a copy of the report on the Assistant Nurse of the Nursing Reconstruction Committee set up by the Royal College of Nursing. He will consider the views expressed by that Committee at the same time as he considers the views of the organisations concerned on the enclosed memorandum. If there are any special points in the report on which you desire to offer comments, the Minister will be glad to have them.

I am to request that the Memorandum be treated by your organisation as strictly confidential.

I am, Madam,
Your obedient Servant,

The Registrar, T. LINDSAY.
General Nursing Council,
23, Portland Place, W.1.

As the Minister of Health instructed the Memorandum to be treated as strictly private, it was proposed by Professor Picken, seconded, and agreed that the discussion take place *in camera*. The Press withdrew.

After long deliberations, the Press were again admitted and the meeting continued.

Finance.

On the recommendation of the Finance Committee, bills and claims submitted for payment were approved, and the sums of £770 for weekly salaries, £20 for petty cash, £400 for postage, and £50 for Insurance stamps were allowed.

Registration.

The position in regard to holding an election of Council was considered. The term of office of the elected members of the present Council was extended by an Order in Council for a period of one year which terminates in December, 1943.

It was agreed that in view of the increasing difficulties of holding an election the Minister of Health be requested to take steps to extend for a further period of one year the term of office of the elected members of Council.

Applications for approval for registration were: General Register, by reciprocity, 6; Supplementary Part of the Register for Mental Nurses, by reciprocity, 1; for Sick Children's Nurses, by reciprocity, 1; for Fever Nurses, by examination, 14. Total, 22.

It was agreed that 125 nurses who had hitherto failed to pay their retention fee, and who now wished their names re-included in the Register, should be re-included.

Education and Examination.

On the recommendation of the Education and Examination Committee it was agreed that:—

The approval of the Willesborough Hospital, Ashford: (a) as a Training School in combination with the Royal Victoria Hospital, Folkestone (for the purposes of Probationers who had already started training at the latter hospital); and (b) as a Complete Training School, be cancelled, but without prejudice to the position and rights of nurses already admitted thereto, and that the name of Willesborough Hospital, Ashford, be removed from the list of approved training schools.

The approval of the scheme of affiliation between the Liverpool Open-Air Hospital for Children and the Royal United Hospital, Bath, be cancelled, but without prejudice to the position and rights of nurses already admitted thereto under the scheme.

The Luton and Dunstable Hospital be now fully approved as a Complete Training School for General Nurses.

Schemes of affiliation and provisional approval of Institutions and part-time Pre-Nursing Courses were approved.

Disciplinary Cases.

The case of Alice McBride, S.R.N. 40759, was presented by the Council's Solicitor. She was charged at the Nottingham Police Court with stealing goods to the value of more than £13 from a store. She was sentenced to three months' imprisonment with hard labour.

The Council considered the case *in camera* and directed that the name of Alice McBride be removed from the Register of Nurses.

The case of Doris Whittaker, S.R.N. 99331, was next considered by the Council.

Miss Whittaker was charged with malingering and self-inflicting injuries whilst a nurse.

A report had been received from the Southport Emergency Hospital concerning her.

It has been her practice to apply for a post, then to go sick. Medical officers have been extremely puzzled at her condition, not being able to diagnose the case.

It has been discovered that she injures her nose with the blade of a nail-file, causing severe bleeding, and injects milk into different parts of her body.

Miss Whittaker appeared before the Council, pleading guilty to these charges.

The Council considered the case *in camera*.

Next Meeting of the Council.

The next meeting of the Council was fixed for November 27th.

REMARKS.

Coming Events cast their Shadows before.

We publish above the letter addressed by the Minister of Health, Mr. Ernest Brown, to the General Nursing Council. It is almost identical with those sent to other nursing organisations, and appears to us to treat the statutory body which governs the Nursing Profession in England and Wales as an entirely subsidiary organisation to the Ministry of Health, an invidious position in which no Minister has the right to place it, but which, if the Council accepts the subservient position by registering semi-trained, unexamined women, it cannot complain in future.

Nursing as a profession for educated women must under such circumstances cease to exist.

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