

supply of nurses carried on in connection with any hospital maintained or controlled by a Government Department or local authority or combination of local authorities, or by any body constituted by special Act of Parliament or incorporated by Royal Charter.

It is to be hoped that the private nursing departments in connection with leading hospitals will continue to supply only Registered Nurses as heretofore, on whose skill the medical profession and the public can depend.

### Part III.

#### Miscellaneous and General.

Regulation No. 19 provides:—

19. "Any sums received by the Council by way of fees under this Act shall be dealt with by the Council as if they had been fees, and received by way of fees under the principal Act, and any expenses incurred by the Council in carrying Parts I. and III. of this Act into effect (including expenses in connection with examinations or prosecutions, and any travelling expenses or subsistence allowance duly allowed to members of the Committee) shall be defrayed out of fees received by the Council."

The above provision, No. 19, is very ambiguous. Does it mean or does it not, that should there be a deficit from the infinitesimal fee of one guinea to be paid by Assistant Nurses, that money paid by Registered Nurses for examination fees, £4 4s. and Registration, £1 1s., their retention fees and the interest on their invested funds, can be used to pay a deficit on the cost of administering the Roll of Assistant Nurses, already without their consent located for administrative purposes at the Registered Nurses' Headquarters in Portland Place? If so, no greater outrage has ever been perpetrated in any Act of Parliament. The fact remains that the Treasury has not been made responsible for an annual deficit for Assistant Nurses' legislation, as it is for a deficit in administering the Midwives Act by the Central Midwives Board. Anyway, Counsel's opinion will be taken on the matter, and should it be found that Clause 19, Part III., makes the Registered Nurses pay for their own de-grading, the utmost publicity possible must be given to this outrageous demand, both in Parliament and throughout the country in the hope of arousing the public conscience on the matter.

Under this heading provisions for the organisation and protection of Assistant Nurses are set forth, and includes the ambiguous clause, which apparently makes it possible to finance the Roll from general funds subscribed by Registered Nurses.

#### Schedules.

##### "The List."

The First Schedule provides for the constitution and proceedings of the Assistant Nurses Committee, and the Second Schedule for compiling a list of nurses not registered or enrolled, which is to be printed and published as an appendix to the Register. This list is to be composed of nurses who failed to register during the term of grace upwards of 20 years ago and is, of course, a breach of faith, if not of contract, with every Registered Nurse who has qualified for and submitted to a State Examination during that period. But by the time one has studied the 16 pages of the Nurses Act, 1943, one realises that truth, honour and justice are indeed *verboten* so far as Registered Nurses are concerned.

Could Berchtesgarden beat it? We doubt it.

We advise every Registered Nurse to procure a copy of the Nurses Act, 1943, and to study it carefully. Sooner or later she may need it for reference.

To be purchased, price 3d. net, directly from H.M. Stationery Office, York House, Kingsway, London, W.C.2; 120, George Street, Edinburgh; 39-41, King Street, Manchester; 1, St. Andrew Crescent, Cardiff; 80, Chichester Street, Belfast; or through a bookseller.

## THE BRITISH COLLEGE OF NURSES, LTD.

A meeting of the Council was held on Thursday, April 29th, at the College, 19, Queen's Gate, London, S.W.7, at 2.30 p.m. The President, Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, was in the Chair.

After prayers had been read and the minutes agreed and signed, the following business was transacted.

#### Correspondence.

Letters in reply to communications *re* the Nurses Act were read.

#### The Nurses Act.

The Council put on record its unanimous disapproval of the hasty legislation promoted by the Minister of Health (Mr. Ernest Brown), whereby the Nurses Act had been made law without any previous consultation or knowledge of its provisions by independent and incorporate bodies of State Registered Nurses, especially in the absence of thousands of nurses serving abroad on national duty with the services of the Crown, who would return to duty to find their status undermined by untrained and semi-trained women granted legal status by Parliament under the Act. Moreover, the fact that the Minister of Health had commandeered with its consent the Headquarters of the General Nursing Council, at 23, Portland Place, W.1, for which the Registered Nurses had paid, for the purpose of compiling a Roll of semi-trained Assistant Nurses, in competition with them, could not be defended on any honourable excuse whatever. The whole proceedings in connection with this ill-advised legislation had been evasive and tyrannical, and could only provoke the disastrous results deserved. The College would continue to hold a watching brief in support of the rights of Registered Nurses.

#### Financial Statement.

A satisfactory statement of accounts was received. A very handsome dividend had been received from the Official Trustees of Charitable Funds which would enable the Council to proceed with expenditure for the benefit of Fellows and Members, and it was agreed to invest a sum annually to renew the lease at its termination—as present Headquarters having been furnished to meet the various departments of the work of the College—this contingency must be provided for. Annual expenditure was considered and it was agreed to elect a Finance, an Education, and a Political Committee at the next meeting of the Council. On the recommendation of the President, it was agreed that benevolence should be associated with the name of the donor of the Endowment Fund (Miss Ethel Mary Fletcher), who was deeply interested in helping those in need.

It was hoped that now that a de-grading of nursing standards Act had been thrust through Parliament by the employers of nurses, that Registered Nurses would realise how necessary it was for the safe nursing of the sick, that they should unite to prevent further deterioration of the Profession of Nursing, and work for the restoration of self-government by every means in their power.

The meeting then terminated and tea was served in the Secretary's office, when an animated unofficial discussion took place.

#### A SHORT HISTORY OF NURSING.

##### From the Earliest Times to the Present Day.

Copies of a Short History of Nursing, by Lavinia L. Dock, R.N., and Isabel M. Stewart, A.M., R.N., just issued, are now available for loan to Fellows and Members. Apply Secretary, British College of Nurses, Ltd., at 19, Queen's Gate, London, S.W.7. This valuable work, which is well illustrated, should be found in every Nurses' Library, and, indeed, every student nurse should own her own copy.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)