

THE AUSTRALIAN NURSING FEDERATION AND THE ASSISTANT NURSE.

At an Ordinary General Meeting of the Royal Victorian College of Nursing, the report of which has just come through in *Una*, the President, Miss Jane Bell, drew the attention of those present to Nursing Legislation in England.

Miss Bell said:

"I do not know whether you are aware that in England there has just been passed a Bill called the Nurses Bill, 1943, giving legal status to what they call assistant nurses. That is to say, that they are to have a special training for two years in special institutions. They are not to be trained in hospitals where the Registered Nurses are being trained. I think that that is a dreadful thing to have done. I really felt terribly depressed when I heard about this. This is supposed to be the outcome of one of the recommendations of the Athlone Committee, but, as stated in Parliament, the four Registered Nurses on that Committee submitted a minority report strongly opposing the title of "Nurse" being applied to a lower grade, but the objection was over-ruled. The legislation controlling this class of workers in New Zealand, where they are designated as "Nursing Aids," was quoted in the British House of Commons. These women have to be trained, as I said, for two years in various institutions for incurable and chronic cases, etc. I do hope that with the good sense and practical-mindedness of Australian nurses right through this Commonwealth, they will steadily set their faces against having any second grade of nurse set up in Australia. There are no second-grade doctors, lawyers or dentists, it is a most undemocratic proceeding, to begin with, and why should the poor have to put up with a less well-paid service? If they are poor and chronic, they do need good nursing, but, of course, the point that affects Registered Nurses, is that they will have, and the English people will have, what I call these untrained nurses in competition with them. Scotland, which only reluctantly introduced similar legislation, has very wisely set a limit of five years for the operation of these regulations, unless Parliament decides otherwise. They have also inserted a clause which has caused misgiving, under which these second-grade nurses may, under certain conditions, qualify for full registration.

"Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING, was the Founder of the International Council of Nurses, and she has been the steadfast advocate for the higher status for nurses. An interesting editorial under the heading, 'A Demand for Justice for the State Registered Nurse,' appears in THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

"The Queensland Branch has asked what is going to be done by the Australian Nursing Federation in view of the activities of this Joint Parliamentary Committee. Surely nurses are not just going to sit down like dumb-driven cattle? I think the Australian Nursing Federation should convene a conference at the earliest possible moment and summon representatives from every State. We cannot afford to be mute under this challenge. Would someone pass a motion that the Australian Nursing Federation be asked to convene an early conference?"

It was moved that an Australian Nursing Federation Conference be held which was seconded, and the motion agreed.

This attitude upon the part of our Australian colleagues is of very great importance as we have reciprocity for State Registration with them, and the de-grading of nursing standards in England and Wales, and Scotland, arouses a position of considerable controversy.

We consider this information so important that we have omitted our reference to the New Education Bill, which we hope to insert in our next issue.

THE PASSING BELL.

It is with deep regret that we record the deaths of the following Sisters in Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service Reserve:

Miss Effie MacPhail, S.R.N., S.C.M., on November 8th, 1943, as the result of an accident in India.

She served for two years with the Civil Nursing Reserve at Windygates, Fife, and joined Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service Reserve in February, 1943.

At a Military Hospital in South Africa, on November 9th, 1943, following a long illness, of Miss Annie Ramsay Mitchell, S.R.N., S.C.M.

She served in the Middle East for eighteen months, and was invalided to South Africa.

Miss Miriam Nellie Crossfield, S.R.N., S.C.M., has died after a long illness. She was trained at the Redhill County Hospital, 1929-1932, and at the Chelsea Hospital for Women, 1933-1934. From a Military hospital in this country she was posted for duty on a hospital carrier, where she served for over a year before being invalided in May, 1943.

APPOINTMENTS.

ASSISTANT MATRON.

Cumberland House Hospital, Whitford Gardens, Mitcham—Miss M. E. Hill, S.R.N., has been appointed Assistant Matron. She was trained at the Gloucester Royal Infirmary, and has been Ward and O.P. Sister at Savernake Hospital; Night Sister at Wilson Hospital, Mitcham; and Ward Sister, including Administrative Duties at St. Helier County Hospital, Carshalton.

Redhill County Hospital, Earlswood Common, Redhill.—Miss I. M. Sabin, S.R.N., has been appointed Second Assistant Matron. She was trained at the Coventry and Warwickshire Hospital and has been Administrative Sister, and Senior Night Sister at Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge; Male Surgical Ward Sister at Victoria Hospital, Accrington; and Home Sister at Kent and Canterbury Hospital.

Kingston County Hospital, Kingston-on-Thames.—Miss I. J. Towler, S.R.N., has been appointed Second Assistant Matron. She was trained at St. James' Hospital, Balham, where she held various posts as Sister, and where she has been Night Superintendent since 1939.

HOME SISTER AND NIGHT SISTER.

Runwell Hospital, near Wickford, Essex.—Miss D. M. Eustace, S.R.N., R.M.N., has been appointed Home Sister and Night Sister. She was trained at Oxford County and City Mental Hospital, Littlemore; at Coleshill Hall, Birmingham; at Selly Oak Hospital, Birmingham; and at N. Middlesex Hospital, where she was Pupil Midwife. Miss Eustace has also been Staff Nurse at the Oxford County and City Mental Hospital; Night Sister at Coleshill Hall, Birmingham; and Home Sister at Marston Green, Birmingham.

LEGACIES FOR NURSES.

We wonder why in these days we so seldom hear of legacies for nurses. Of course, in the future with the great rise in salaries, their financial position will be much more secure.

Sir Louis Pearson, 80, former High Sheriff of Nottinghamshire, and head of the Beeston Boiler Company, left £459,954.

Five years ago Sir Louis married Miss Margaret Grimmer, 30, on the staff of the Nottingham General Hospital, who was nurse to his first wife.

He has left her an annuity of £1,000, to be reduced to an annuity of £500 in the event of her remarriage.

Why these restrictions?

If the lady is wise, there will be no question of remarriage.

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