

### KING EDWARD'S HOSPITAL FUND FOR LONDON.

At a meeting of the General Council of King Edward's Hospital Fund for London, on December 10th, 1946, speaking on the National Health Service, Lord Catto said that on the appointed day in April, 1948, the hospital services would embark on a venture without parallel in our social history. "There is much in the hospital part of the Act that is entirely in accord with the views which this Fund has from time to time pressed upon successive Ministers of Health. It is true that to many supporters of the hospitals, the first proposals for outright nationalisation seemed to endanger much of permanent value in the voluntary system, but the action of the Minister in leaving the way open for voluntary effort and voluntary gifts to play their part in the future goes a long way to allay any misgivings. We believe that voluntary effort will rise to the occasion. The old hospital endowments provided a substantial nucleus, and with further generous support they will hope to humanise the whole hospital service. Some have prophesied the end of voluntary gifts with assumption of responsibility by the State. This view is not shared by the Fund and those who support it. Is it not short-sighted? Now for the first time in the history of the hospitals it becomes possible to give without the mental reservation that the gift may be swallowed up in routine expenses."

Speaking of the future of the King's Fund, the Chairman said: "It will have a part to play, the importance of which it is impossible to exaggerate. The whole medical organisation, the nursing services, the various special departments and the administrative side are undergoing a process of adjustment to new conditions. There are many directions in which the trail is best blazed by voluntary effort. The King's Fund finds itself in this new world in a position somewhat resembling that of the Rockefeller Trust, whose activities in its wider field have achieved such great results. No difficulty arises in regard to our powers: by our Act of Parliament of 1907 provision was made for a wide range of activities. Our funds are to be used, in the words of the Act, for the 'support, benefit or extension of the hospitals of London,' and we have power to do all such things as may be incidental or conducive thereto. With the disappearance of the distinction between voluntary and publicly provided hospitals all will come alike within the scope of the Fund." Lord Catto said that there were many directions in which the need for development was already clear.

First, more money could and would be spent upon activities in which the Fund was already engaged, such as the improvement of hospital catering. There was still an urgent need to help the recruitment of nurses—the whole expansion of the hospital services was held up more by the need for nurses of the right quality than by any other single factor. With this in mind, the Fund was continuing, not only its recruitment work, but also its support of preliminary training schools for nurses.

Secondly, the Fund's resources would enable it to help the hospitals with the provision of special equipment and all kinds of amenities needed to make up the leeway of the war years. Then grants would be available to help hospitals to keep pace with the many new methods of hospital treatment which medical science had opened up. A substantial grant had recently been made towards the establishment of a much needed recovery home for diabetics, where patients could learn thoroughly the new way of life they would need to follow.

\* Another field of development lay in the rehabilitation and extension of convalescent homes and allied provision. Finally, there was still need for the provision of better training facilities for the various grades of hospital staff. Already a series of bursaries for training in hospital

administration had been awarded to men whose careers were interrupted by the war, and the scheme promised to be a success. With the return of the possibility of foreign travel, much might be done to ensure that medical men, administrators, matrons, caterers and others kept fully abreast of developments elsewhere, it was the intention of the Fund to make available a series of travel grants on Rockefeller lines which would ensure that those who could profit from such experience were not denied the opportunity to do so. It was often of great value for those responsible for the reconstruction of hospitals to visit hospitals abroad.

Sir Edward Peacock (Treasurer) said that the total disbursement for hospitals during the year had been £364,000 as compared with £329,000 in 1945. In addition, grants amounting to £7,500 were also being made to certain hospitals from the special Radiotherapy Fund. Income from investments was £214,000, and from subscriptions and donations £44,000.

Sir Ernest Rock Carling referred to the great need for the provision of additional accommodation in convalescent homes, homes for the dying and for the so-called incurables, and also for long-stay cases. This would free beds in the acute wards, for which there was a waiting list of 30,000 for the London voluntary hospitals alone.

Lord Donoughmore, Chairman of the Management Committee, reported that 12 bursaries of £600 a year had been awarded. Under the scheme each bursar spent six-month periods in three different hospitals, in addition to attending courses of lectures and demonstrations.

The Hon. Arthur Howard said that it would be disastrous if the National Health Service meant the loss of one of the great intangibles: the influence and inspiration which institutions derive from individuals, and which enables them to regenerate themselves year after year. Where that personal influence was apparent the whole thing was abundantly alive. When the new Government supervised service came, and the need for maintenance grants by the Fund ceased, he hoped that the Fund would search out the institutions where this inspiration was alive and encourage it.

### SISTER TUTOR TRAINING GRANTS.

Fifty scholarships will be available during 1947 under the Ministry of Health scheme for giving financial assistance to selected State Registered Nurses who wish to train as Sister Tutors or Male Tutors.

Selected applicants will be given an allowance of £150 for the period of training (about a year) towards the cost of maintenance and incidental expenses, and the training and examination fees will be paid by the Government. Subject to certain conditions, an additional allowance will be payable to a married man in respect of his wife and any children under 16 years of age.

Applicants must be on the General Part of the State Register or, in the case of male nurses, the part of the Register for Male Nurses (general trained), for England and Wales, or registered by reciprocity, and must have had at least three years post-registration experience in nursing in a hospital, including a period of one year's experience as a ward sister or corresponding rank in the case of a male nurse.

A State Registered Nurse who wishes to apply for assistance under this scheme should write as soon as possible to the Secretary, Minister of Health, Division 3C, Whitehall, London, S.W.1.

Selected candidates will be required to give a written undertaking that, when they qualify, they will serve as sister tutors or male tutors in hospitals in Great Britain for at least two years, but they will be allowed to choose the hospital in which they wish to serve, provided a vacancy exists.

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