

## KING EDWARD'S HOSPITAL FUND FOR LONDON.

### ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING.

The 49th Annual Meeting of the General Council of King Edward's Hospital Fund for London was held at St. James's Palace on July 1st. In the absence of His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester, the chair was taken by the Speaker of the House of Commons, who said: "Our minds are full of the National Health Service Bill. Many of those who for years past have lived in and worked for the voluntary hospitals are afraid that much for which the voluntary hospitals have stood may disappear. Such anxiety is very general, but some will be relieved by the Minister's declared intention to preserve a measure of freedom and independence throughout the new organisation, and also by the provision that is being made for the Hospital Management Committees to have free money which they can use for purposes outside the services provided by the State. . . ."

"Now as regards the Fund itself. It is not immediately affected by the Bill, but it is obvious that we shall have to take account of the vast changes now about to take place in the hospital system. The fact that after the appointed day the Minister will assume responsibility for the ordinary expenditure of the hospitals will set free a large proportion of the income of the Fund for purposes other than that to which it has been for the most part devoted in the past—'by new methods and in new ways,' as it is put in the Annual Report.

"The King's Fund has never been confined to financial support alone, and from its earliest days it has taken a deep interest in the efficiency of the hospital services. The Act of 1907 by which the Fund is governed was deliberately drafted in wide terms to allow for the expansion of activities in which the Fund was at that date already engaged. It seems clear, therefore, that the way will be open to the Fund to use its resources to promote progress in all those many directions which will lie outside the immediate purview of a State hospital service."

Sir Edward Peacock, Treasurer, said that the income of the Fund for the year 1945 had been well maintained under all headings, and so far seemed not to have been affected by the proposals of the National Health Service Bill.

Excluding legacies, the general receipts came to £324,095, as against £303,584 in the previous year. General legacies amounted to £140,615, as compared with £50,419, and a further instalment of £75,000 was received from the Nuffield Trust for the Special Areas. The total receipts, therefore, amounted to £464,710 in 1945, as compared with £354,003 in 1944, an increase of £110,707. Although the ordinary distribution was raised from £280,000 to £302,500 and provision was made for two special grants of £10,000 each, it was possible to transfer to reserve the sum of £117,264, thanks to receipts from legacies and the Nuffield Trust for the Special Areas. He continued:

"There seems to be a growing impression that, in view of the fact that current expenses of hospitals are to be provided by the State, need for help to voluntary hospitals will disappear with the passing of the Bill. But that is very far from the fact. Voluntary hospitals between now and the time when the Bill comes into effect 18 months or two years hence, will suffer from financial difficulties greater than at any time for many years. This arises mainly from an unprecedented advance in expenses, partly because of the rising costs of all supplies, partly owing to new regulations regarding the nursing staff and higher salaries for domestic staff, and partly because of heavy reconditioning expenses.

"After the Bill has come into effect, all contributions to the upkeep of hospitals will cease, and the Fund will have to take careful stock of the situation and consider how best we may continue to serve the welfare of the patient. We

shall have a wider constituency, because what were formerly the local authority hospitals will be added to our list and we shall be free to foster those things which help to make the hospital a human, sympathetic place, rather than a merely efficient machine."

Dr. Morley Fletcher, presenting the Report of the Nursing Recruitment Service, referred to the demand for a service on similar lines in Scotland. The Nuffield Provincial Hospitals Trust had accepted financial and administrative responsibility for the service through its Scottish Advisory Committee, and it was hoped that there would be the fullest co-operation between the Recruitment Centres in Scotland and England.

Sir Alfred Webb-Johnson, President of the Royal College of Surgeons, said that many had held the view that a change of ownership of hospitals was unnecessary in order to achieve an integrated hospital service for the nation. He continued: "If Parliament decides otherwise, then we must bend our efforts to ensuring that under a State service we shall preserve the atmosphere and freedom in which so much has been done for the advancement of medical science. We must do our best to avoid the dangers that are inherent in a State monopoly of hospitals. We are fortunate in having a Minister of Health who, although he is convinced and is determined to carry through bold and revolutionary changes, is ready and anxious to discuss the dangers of such proceedings and how to avoid them. He realises that safeguards are necessary, and has undertaken to propose amendments on the Report Stage of the Bill which will give a greater measure of freedom to Hospital Management Committees. We do not want to see local indifference with regard to hospitals because the responsibility lies at some distance with the Regional Board. Nor do we want to discourage right-thinking people from helping their fellows in distress when suffering from illness. Above all, we do not want standardisation, as with standardisation we get a brake on progress. When Parliament decides on a national hospital policy, the Fund will do all in its power to make that policy a success."

### DISTRIBUTION OF PENICILLIN.

As from June 1st, 1946, the present free issue of penicillin by the Ministry of Supply through the hospital system will cease.

From the date mentioned, penicillin will be available to hospitals, to the medical and dental professions and to retail pharmacists through trade channels. Supplies should be obtained from the usual suppliers of such products.

Penicillin or any preparation containing penicillin may be supplied to the public only against the prescription of a registered medical or dental practitioner.

Initially most of the penicillin will be in the form of dried powder packed in vials or ampoules containing 0.1, 0.2, 0.5, 1.0 mega units. The maximum retail prices of these packs will be 2s. 9d., 4s. 9d., 10s. 6d., and 20s. respectively. Penicillin will also be available in an oil-wax suspension for injection.

Pharmacists may use dried penicillin in dispensing the prescriptions of registered medical and dental practitioners. As time goes on, increasing quantities of penicillin preparations will become available from the manufacturers.

Should any difficulty be experienced in obtaining supplies, advice may be sought from the Ministry of Supply, Penicillin Production Control, Tothill Street, London, S.W.1. (Telephone: Abbey 7788; Ext. 403).

### WILLS AND BEQUESTS.

Mr. Alfred Clegg, of Forrest Avenue, Marsh, Huddersfield, left £5,234.

He left £1,000 to Dewsbury Infirmary and £500 to Leeds City Infirmary in memory of his wife "Nurse Woodcock"; and residue to Huddersfield Royal Infirmary.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)