

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 July 25th.

Finance

On the recommendation of the Finance Committee, bills and claims submitted for payment were approved, and the sums of £12,000 for examiners' claims, £4,000 for weekly salaries, £1,100 for postage, £300 for insurance stamps, £50 for receipt stamps, and £40 for petty cash were allowed to cover the period July 13th to September 13th.

The Council considered *in camera* the present position of the finances, also ways by which the income of the Council may be increased.

Registration

Applications for approval for Registration were received: General part of the Register by reciprocity, 32; Supplementary part of the Register for Nurses for Mental Diseases, by reciprocity, 1; for Sick Children's Nurses, by reciprocity, 1; for Fever Nurses, by reciprocity, 2; by examination, 13. Total, 49.

It was agreed that the names of 102 nurses who had hitherto failed to pay their retention fee, and now wished their names reincluded in the Register should be reincluded.

It was reported that a copy of the Register of Nurses for 1947 had been received from the Joint Nursing and Midwives Council for Northern Ireland.

Education and Examination

It was agreed that the University of Leeds be approved as an institution for the purposes of the establishment of Sister Tutor Courses.

Approval was withdrawn from hospitals unable to comply with the Council's requirement regarding the minimum daily average occupation of beds.

Approval of hospitals as Training Schools was granted, and Pre-Nursing Courses approved.

At the June examinations the following candidates were successful:—

Preliminary examination—			
Part I and II	...	...	2,329
Part I only	...	...	1,682
Part II only	...	...	1,485
			5,496
Final examination:			
General nurses	...	...	2,419
Male nurses	...	...	56
Mental nurses	...	...	47
Mental defectives' nurses	...	...	1
Sick children's nurses	...	...	129
Fever nurses	...	...	190
			2,842

General Purposes

Estimates were approved for equipment for the Canteen to the value of £115 1s. 3d.

Uniform

It was recommended that, as the Uniform Committee has reached a stage in the revision of the Registered Uniform, representatives interested in Nursing bodies should be invited to a conference on October 24th.

Assistant Nurses

Provisional approval of hospitals as Training Schools for Assistant Nurses was granted; and that the names of 776 applicants be inserted in the Roll of Assistant Nurses.

The next meeting of the Council was fixed for September 24th.

ROARING CENTURY 1846-1946.

A review, or rather a delightful work on modern history, like R. J. Cruikshank's "Roaring Century 1846—1946" (Hamish Hamilton) brings us to realise the profound changes—social, political, industrial and economic—that have overtaken the British people during the last hundred years.

Fact is stranger than fiction, and yet while unfolding before the reader, in most fascinating diction, the story of the unparalleled achievements, struggles and disappointments, through which we have passed, the author clearly reveals how truly it was Charles Dickens, the fictional genius who, through his novels, and as Editor of *The Daily News* (which he founded in 1846) became the great social reformer of the century!

As Mr. Cruikshank says, "If in the pages that follow, there may seem to some readers an excessive pre-occupation with Charles Dickens, then the blame must entirely rest on Charles Dickens, for such is the power of that genius that it is impossible to look at scenes and aspects of London life, in 1946, without saying, 'that of course belongs to *Bleak House*' or 'This is *Our Mutual Friend*.'" How then can one expect to escape that mighty influence in going back to 1846?

"... There is a modern school of critics who, having discovered that Dickens had considerable faults as a man, proceed to denounce Pickwick as a humbug and David Copperfield as a villain. This is an order of moral snobbery even worse than the social snobbery of those Baconians who argue that Shakespeare could not have written sublime poetry because he was a poor boy, and that it would take at least a Lord Chancellor to compose *Antony and Cleopatra*. But the mystery of genius is of a piece with the mystery of religion. The wind of the spirit blows where it lists."

Comparison of conditions "Then and Now" is of engrossing interest: 1846 was the year when Income Tax was 7d. in the £ instead of 9s.; in transport, coach and coaching inns were disappearing before the sprawl of railways; now in 1946, motors compete with the fastest trains while the unlimited speed of aeroplanes and atomic energy threaten the elimination of man! The age of the machine indeed!

It is refreshing therefore as the reader turns the pages to find that the century has also been one that produced many men and women of literary genius. The author's survey is the grand march past of brilliant writers, poets, and novelists—to mention a few—Harrison Ainsworth, Dickens, Lord Tennyson, Christina Rossetti, John Ruskin, Charles Reade, John Stuart Mill, George Borrow, Robert Browning, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, the Brontë sisters, Charles Kingsley, Thomas Hardy, George Eliot, Mrs. Gaskell, Rudyard Kipling, Robert Louis Stevenson, John Galsworthy, and many more whose works of permanent value are now classics.

It is the century in which women were enfranchised and we are reminded that until the end of the 'Forties there were few ways open to an intelligent girl to get an education.

In referring to Queen Victoria's opposition to the enfranchisement of women, the author remarks: "Who could be more ruthlessly efficient than Florence Nightingale?" "... Where was to be found a more powerful intellectual equipment than George Eliot's? In political journalism there was no more formidable a character than Harriet Martineau, for long the leader-writer of *The Daily News*!"

We can well recommend "Roaring Century 1846—1946" as a book that is more than pleasant as well as profitable reading. The picture of our leading statesmen, their political battles and times, are of moving interest—in spite of a somewhat political bias, which is more than atoned for in the wide survey of a great century for our race.

A. S. B.

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