

King Edward's Hospital Fund for London.

Report of Annual Meeting of Council, June 21, 1949.

HIS Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester presided at the Annual Meeting of the General Council of King Edward's Hospital Fund for London at St. James's Palace, and addressed those present;

"At our meeting a year ago I said that the new Act had given the hospitals of this country a framework well fitted to provide a comprehensive service—the question was whether we could put the content into it. There is evidence of deep interest being taken by many countries in what we are doing here.

"The problems with which we are confronted must now be solved: they are common to many countries.

"First, there is the steeply rising cost of the hospital service: on this the view of the King's Fund is definite and has been set out again in the Annual Report. This view may be summarised by saying that the old system of accounts is obsolete, and that until departmental costing is adopted we have no real means of knowing whether or not money is being used to the best advantage.

"Second, there is everywhere a disproportion between the number of nurses needed for growing services and the numbers likely to be available—even where, as in this country, there has been a steady increase in numbers. In this country it is going to be no easy task to maintain over the next few years even the present position in the face of many adverse factors. The Fund has been emphasising the need to build up a larger body of trained nurses in the hospitals. We have recently opened a residential Staff College for Ward Sisters and the first 24 staff nurses have just gone back to their hospitals to take up their duty as sisters. The course has been much appreciated. It is legitimate to hope that this new college will prove to be a real help.

"The third problem, which is common to all countries, is the need to overhaul the administrative machinery. Progress in hospital affairs has been so rapid in recent years that everywhere, sometime in the most unexpected places, there are to be found departments or even whole units or branches of the service which are content with methods which become obsolete 30 or 40 years ago. The reception given to the Fund's memorandum on Admissions and Records published last September shows how widespread is the need for help of this kind. Out of this has come a new school for Medical Records Officers at the Middlesex Hospital—another most welcome development into which the King's Fund has put some £7,500. We are also developing a training centre for hospital caterers at St. Pancras Hospital.

"I pass now to a development of a different kind. You are being asked this morning to set aside a quarter of a million pounds to provide homes to which the hospitals may send sick persons, normally over sixty years of age, for whom there is no other suitable provision. The medical advances of recent years—blood transfusion, penicillin and so on—have brought a problem of their own, a great increase in the number of elderly patients; and the lack of domestic help makes the problem acute. Other voluntary bodies, notably the Nuffield Corporation for the Aged, are at work in this field, and the official services are doing what they can. But we have come to the conclusion, largely as the result of the first-hand experience of the Emergency Bed Service last winter, that a vigorous effort is needed to get some hundreds of beds open in homes of this kind before next winter. We are, therefore, inviting the hospitals, through their friends and supporters, or other voluntary bodies prepared to accept the responsibility to come forward

and help. The Fund is prepared within the limits of the scheme to provide the bulk of the capital cost needed."

The Council approved a resolution setting aside a sum of £250,000 to assist in the establishment of homes for the aged sick no longer in need of active treatment. The understanding would be that these homes would be managed by voluntary organisations but would be linked with the hospital service, and that the Fund, while providing for the capital expenditure, would rely on the Metropolitan Regional Hospital Boards to enter into contractual arrangements with the homes for the maintenance and care of patients sent into them.

The Accounts for 1948 presented by Sir Edward Peacock, Treasurer, showed an increase in income from investments at £238,827, in part due to the addition to capital in 1948 of £425,000 from the Nuffield Trust for the Special Areas. Apart from legacies and other special receipts, ordinary income had exceeded expenditure by £67,710; but the fact that the Fund did not spend the whole of its income in 1948, was not owing to lack of claimants, but rather to the fact that in the new conditions of the Hospital world it must proceed with caution.

Lord Iliffe, in moving a vote of thanks to His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester for presiding, said that the mere distribution of grants was the least vital of the Fund's activities. The King's Fund endeavoured to ensure that humanity, efficiency and State control went hand in hand.

Lentils.

A READER has asked us for tried recipes in the use of red split lentils which do not require meat or bones.

We have made inquiries, and a friend has sent us the following recipes, stressing that the success of lentil dishes relies upon the length of time the lentils are allowed to soak before including them with other ingredients.

Lentil Cutlets.

- ½ lb. red lentils.
- 2 oz. margarine.
- 2 teaspoonsful each of chopped parsley and onion.
- 2 eggs.
- ½ teaspoonful mixed herbs.
- A breakfastcupful of mashed potato.
- 1 lb. tomatoes.

Mince the onion and fry in half the margarine. Add the lentils and sufficient water to cover. Cook slowly until quite soft and dry. When cooked rub the lentil mixture through a hair sieve with the potatoes, parsley, onions and herbs. Add the beaten egg and seasoning and the margarine, melted. If the mixture seems too soft to shape, mix in a few white breadcrumbs. Shape into round cakes, brush with beaten egg, dust with crumbs and bake in a hot oven for about 20 minutes.

Arrange a cone of mashed potatoes in the middle of a hot dish, arrange the cutlets round, and a border of sliced tomatoes cooked until just tender in the oven. Serve with sauce or gravy.

Nut and Lentil Roast.

- 3 oz. lentils.
- 3 oz. ground walnuts.
- 4 oz. dried crumbs.
- ½ teaspoonful mace.
- 2 eggs.
- Pepper and salt.

Cook the lentils in a double saucepan in ½ pint of water. Add the ground nuts, give sufficient crumbs to make firm; then add the eggs and seasoning, and stir over the fire to set the egg.

Turn out, and when slightly cool form into a neat shape, dust with flour, and bake 20 minutes. Serve with onion sauce.

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