

## The British College of Nurses, Ltd.

A MEETING of The Council of The British College of Nurses, Ltd., was held at 19, Queen's Gate, London, S.W.7, on Wednesday, January 31st, 1951, at 2.30 p.m.

Miss M. E. Thurnham, S.R.N., F.B.C.N., Vice-President, was in the chair.

Prayers having been read, the Minutes of the last meeting were confirmed.

A communication was reported from the President—Miss Helena McLoughlin—expressing warm thanks to the Council for good wishes and sympathy in her illness, and giving the good news of her satisfactory progress.

A charming letter expressing appreciation for hospitality extended by the Council of the British College of Nurses, to 20 Swedish Matrons, when visiting this country—was received from Miss Elisabeth Dillner.

Many letters were reported of grateful thanks from recipients of Christmas cheer.

On considering an application from a member for financial help, it was unanimously agreed to award a monthly grant from the Ethel Mary Fletcher Benevolent Fund.

### Draft Annual Report.

The Draft Annual Report to be presented at the Annual General Meeting was read and adopted.

### Lectures

In view of the appreciation shown by Fellows and Members of the Lectures delivered by Mr. Francis Edwards, during the last session, it was unanimously agreed to continue the course on English Literature. The first Lecture is to be held at the close of the Annual General Meeting on Wednesday, February 28th, 1951. Tea at 4 p.m., when Fellows, Members and their friends are cordially invited.

The Meeting then terminated.

### THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

The Annual General Meeting of Fellows and Members will be held on Wednesday, February 28th, 1951, at 2.30 p.m., to be followed by the celebration of Registration Day and the ceremony of the cutting of the cake, and the first of a Course of Lectures by Mr. F. Edwards on "The Drama." All Fellows and Members are heartily welcome to both these functions, and their friends also, to the celebration ceremony of Registration Day, and the Lecture.

## Rehabilitation of the Disabled.

### Courses in Belgium.

DR. HAROLD BALME, O.B.E., consultant adviser on rehabilitation to the Ministry of Health, the World Health Organisation and other United Nations' agencies, conducted two one-day courses on the rehabilitation of the disabled, arranged by the British Council in Brussels, on February 1st and 2nd. One hundred officials of the Belgian Ministries of Health and Labour, doctors and social workers attended each course.

Dr. Balme lectured on "The new approach to disability" and "The social and economic resettlement of the disabled." A number of British films on the subject were shown and members of the course visited the rehabilitation centre at Brugmann Hospital, Brussels, the first such centre to be established in Belgium.

The object of the courses is to stimulate a more general interest in the problem of rehabilitation and to stress its social and economic aspects rather than its purely medical ones. The courses were held under the patronage of the Belgian Ministries of Health and Labour.

## Christmas

IN HOSPITAL LIFE, Christmas comes as a very wonderful break in our ordinary routine—a sort of psychological tonic that uplifts our morale, and rekindles our enthusiasm, so that we go forward to meet whatever trials and difficulties that may arise in the New Year, with renewed courage and faith. Though primarily a feast of The Family, there are few Nurses who do not enjoy the celebration of Christmas in Hospital.

From late October, or even earlier, secret preparations had been going forward, use being made of off-duty periods to scour the shops, and gather ideas for planning decorations, and making small gifts for the patients' Christmas stockings. As the time drew nearer, the air of expectancy and tension increased, and there was no end to the number of volunteers to assist with hanging decorations, dressing the tree, etc. At last Christmas Eve arrived—the singing of Carols through darkened Wards, by members of the Nursing and Medical Staff, is a tradition that would die hard with us. The patients joined in, physical suffering and even separation from family and home, forgotten at least for the moment, as we welcomed once again, after almost two thousand years, the coming of the Prince of Peace.

On Christmas morning, stockings distributed overnight, were investigated as the patients wakened, and the obvious surprise and delight of the recipients amply compensated for any off-duty lost in their preparation. Meantime, great enjoyment was got by members of the Night Staff, wakening their colleagues on Day Duty, with Christmas greetings and delivery of numerous gifts.

More parcels were unwrapped and exchanged over the breakfast table, before the Staff departed to their respective Wards. Here an air of gaiety pervaded the atmosphere. The more convalescent patients attended a short Service in the Hospital Chapel, while the "bed absolute" patients, followed one relayed over the wireless.

At twelve noon, the real good old-fashioned Christmas Dinner arrived, the turkey being ceremoniously carved by a member of the Medical Staff, specially recruited for the purpose. Dinner was enjoyed to the full by all, even the "feeding" patients, whose only regret was losing the chance of a drumstick, by having to eat their turkey minced!

After Lunch, and the general Ward tidying being finished (no nurse could ever be accused of being slow on this occasion), the Staff had Lunch in their special room on the Ward, whilst the patients awaited their visitors, who obviously keenly appreciated our efforts at decoration, and even more so, the luxury of a dainty Christmas tea with the patients, whilst discussing friends, relatives and all the Yuletide activities.

At last (at least for the patients) the happy day drew to a close. After supper, the Wards settled down quietly to listen to the radio, and to think back, perhaps, over the day and all its happiness. Relieved by the Night Nurses (who appeared to have combined day and night duty), we went our way, to enjoy various small Ward parties, or to visit friends and display and acclaim Christmas gifts. At last, very late, or probably very early, we retired to bed, quite confident that this was the very best Christmas ever spent in Hospital, a little wistful perhaps that Christmas Day itself was over, but comforted by the reminder of the Boxing Day Children's Party, Staff Dinners, and other activities still to come.

Our Children's Party held on Boxing Day was really the climax of our celebrations. It was attended by all, whether eligible for a gift from Father Christmas or not. Father Christmas was scheduled to make his triumphant entry at 3.30 p.m. but for more than an hour before then, small visitors accompanied by their parents kept arriving. They gazed in admiring bewilderment at the huge tree plentifully hung with all kinds of toys, many of which were given by our good friends Messrs. Tate & Lyle, Limited, whilst many

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