

consider it defensible. In the body appointed by the State to govern the Nursing profession, we regard it as essential that the Nurses should have not only their direct representatives, but also that the Nurse Training Schools should also be adequately represented. We should feel much pity for the body of gentlemen whom Dr. Rentoul desires should take charge of some fifteen or twenty thousand women; and, in our humble judgment, it would only be kindness to afford them some feminine help in a task which we imagine they would find decidedly arduous.

The Divisional Boards are to draw up uniform regulations for their guidance, and these are to be approved of by the General Medical Council. The regulations are to provide for the holding of examinations of candidates desiring to be registered as Obstetric Nurses. In the case of a general Nurses' Registration Scheme, it might, perhaps, be advisable to introduce the same principle for those Nurses who have not succeeded in obtaining certificates from the Institutions at which they were trained. Whether it would be advisable for the governing body to appoint a Board of Examiners to test the technical knowledge of all Nurses before being registered, or whether such examiners would only be employed to visit the Training Schools and take part in the examinations held at those Institutions, are questions of great importance, but into which we need not, at the present moment, enter.

No person is to be granted a certificate of registration, it is suggested, whose age is under twenty-five or over sixty years. The period of training which the Act seems to require for an Obstetric Nurse is to be not less than six months, nor more than twelve months, a term which, if it be superadded to an ordinary course of general training, would doubtless be quite sufficient, but which, if it stood alone, would be certainly inadequate. The fee for registration is to be £1, an amount which it is possible might not prove sufficient to cover the working expenses of the scheme. The provisions for removing the names of Obstetric Nurses from the Register are very definite and complete, and, at the same time, appear to be just and reasonable. Power is also given to the Board to censure, fine, or suspend a Nurse who has in the opinion of the Board proved to be deserving of such punishment. The Register is to be published annually; the Act is to extend to the whole

of the United Kingdom; and the Schedules are very valuable and practical.

In short, there are contained, in Dr. Rentoul's Bill, provisions which are not only novel, but, in our judgment, would be most valuable. It appears to us that it would be possible upon the basis of his Bill to frame a measure which would command general approval, and which would prove to be a satisfactory solution of the difficult questions relating to both Midwives and Nurses, which are at present causing so much professional trouble, and which, it is now almost universally acknowledged, must sooner or later be settled.

## Lectures on Elementary Physiology in relation to Medical Nursing.

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### LECTURE IV.—THE EXCRETORY ORGANS.

*(Continued from page 84.)*

**T**HIS condition of DROPSY is met with in every soft tissue of the body, and then is described by different terms, so that it will greatly simplify your comprehension of the condition to remember that wherever the watery effusion is met with, whether in the lower or upper limbs, or in one of the closed cavities of the body, it is always, to all intents and purposes, the same kind of fluid, and due to the same disease of an organ, or to the same change in the general constitution of the blood, or to the same particular obstruction to the free course of the circulation. This will become evident to you in nursing a patient suffering from advanced Heart disease, or Liver disease, or Kidney disease, because it is in such cases that Dropsy most usually occurs.

Then you will, perhaps, find that not only are the legs greatly swollen as already described, but the swelling of the thighs, abdomen, and back is equally great. The distinguishing mark of œdema is shown by pressing the finger firmly on the swollen part. If the tissues are healthy, the pressure only causes a little transient redness, but if there be fluid of any kind beneath the skin, this is displaced, and a more or less marked indentation of the surface, usually described as "pitting," is produced. Wherever fluid exists under the skin, then, this "pitting" can

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