

tion before a Justice of the Peace that the applicant has never been debarred from practice in any country by reason of misdemeanour or professional misconduct.

In the case of those holding no such certificate of qualification, candidates for examination by the Council are required to produce evidence of three years' training in an institution used for medical and surgical purposes and containing not less than twelve beds, or two years in such an institution and one year under the supervision of a medical practitioner, with certificates required under (b) and (c) above.

It is interesting to note that while a separate examination of Midwives is conducted, evidence of knowledge of monthly nursing, including the care of lying-in patients, diet, and care of infants, &c., is included in the scope of the examination for the nursing certificate.

The examination of Midwives covers much the same ground as that of the London Obstetrical Society.

No certificated Midwife is allowed to administer any drugs or to apply any instruments except those expressly permitted under a regulation which states:—

Every Midwife is required to use antiseptics, and will be permitted to use the catheter and vaginal douche, and ergot where specially indicated.

All certificated Midwives are required to keep a simple register, embodying the name of parent, sex of child, date of birth, and result of accouchement to mother and child.

It is a curious fact that only in relation to the training of attendants or nurses of the insane is the principle laid down that the candidate for examination must have received practical instruction under the Matron or head attendant in nursing and attending on the insane, yet this should be a fundamental principle in relation to the education of all nurses.

It will be seen that Registration of Trained Nurses in Natal has followed on much the same lines as that in Cape Colony in 1891. It is good in so far as it enables the public to discriminate between those who have received training and those who have not; and, further, brings nurses under the control and discipline of a central governing body. But the plan of government by the Medical Council has a flaw which we have learnt to consider fatal in any form of government. There is no representation of the class governed on the governing body. Cape Colony and Natal have the distinction of being the only colonies to effect the Registration of Nurses during the reign of Queen Victoria. It is inevitable that pioneers should make mistakes. Eventually we hope the Natal Medical Council will realise not only the justice but the wisdom of according to nurses direct representation on the governing body.

## The Royal British Nurses' Association and State Registration.

At the meeting of the General Council of the Royal British Nurses' Association, at which H.R.H. Princess Christian presided, held on Friday, April 24th, at 10, Orchard Street, Mr. Edward Fardon said he had been asked by Nurse James to announce that she intended to bring the question of State Registration of Trained Nurses before the annual meeting of the Association in June. The meeting received this information with discreet silence.

It is of interest at the present juncture to review the position taken up by the Royal British Nurses' Association in regard to the all-important question of State Registration of Trained Nurses since its formation. The Association was founded, with the object of obtaining legal status for nurses, in the autumn of 1887, and on February 13th, 1888, at the public meeting held in St. George's Hall, at which the objects of the Association were explained, the President stated: "The first object of this Association is to obtain for the calling of nursing the recognised position and legal constitution of a profession which shall from henceforth be inseparable from the noble profession of medicine."

In furtherance of this principle, a voluntary Register was opened in 1891, and numbers of well trained nurses applied to have their names entered therein.

In accordance with the principles of the Association, the Register published in 1891 contained the following preface:—

"The Registration of Nurses was advocated many years ago by the then President of the General Medical Council, but no attempt has been seriously made to undertake the work until within the last four years. It is now universally acknowledged that persons who undertake the duties of a Trained Nurse should be qualified to discharge those duties efficiently, and that they should be under some professional control.

"As a well-known fact, however, at present, any woman, although she may be destitute of knowledge or of moral character, or of both, can without let or hindrance term herself a Trained Nurse, can obtain employment in that capacity, and bring about much danger to the sick and discredit to the calling. Nor is there any means of preventing any Certificated Nurse who by drunkenness, theft, or even graver offences has proved herself unworthy of trust, from continuing her professional duties under cover of the Certificate which she is still able to produce.

"One of the objects for which the Royal British Nurses' Association was founded was to remedy these undoubted abuses by the institution of a system of Registration analogous to that enforced by law, for many years past, for medical men. The following pages are the first-fruits of three years' incessant work and organisation in this direction. Mistakes may, possibly, have been made, but no care has been spared to reduce the chances of error to a minimum. It

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