

Draft of a Bill for the Registration of Trained Nurses.

In accordance with the instructions of the General Meeting of the Society for the State Registration of Trained Nurses, held in May last, its Executive Committee has, during the last six months, drafted a Bill for discussion, which Bill was presented to, and with two alterations approved by, a Special General Meeting of Members summoned specially to consider its clauses.

Thus every Member of the Society has been afforded an opportunity of consultation with her fellow members, and of offering any suggestions upon the points embodied in the Bill, and the alert and interested meeting which considered it proved that the Members of the Society appreciated this undeniable right.

But we are well aware that duty often prevents nurses from attending meetings, however important they may be, and we therefore publish the Bill, with annotations, where these appear desirable, printed in italics, and are forwarding a copy gratis to every member of the Society. In return we ask each member to keep this copy carefully for future reference.

DRAFT OF A BILL FOR THE REGISTRATION OF TRAINED NURSES.

TITLE.

An Act to regulate the qualifications of Trained Nurses and to provide for their Registration.

WHEREAS it is expedient that persons requiring nursing assistance should be enabled to distinguish qualified from unqualified nurses: Be it therefore enacted by the King's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:—

1. This Act may for all purposes be cited as "The Nursing Act."

2. This Act shall commence and take effect from the first day of October One thousand nine hundred and—

The name of the Act as suggested by the members of the Society for the State Registration of Trained Nurses is comprehensive and exact.

CONSTITUTION OF GENERAL NURSING COUNCIL.

3. A Council which shall be styled "The General Council of Nursing Education and Registration of the United Kingdom," hereinafter referred to as the General Nursing Council, shall be established as a Body Corporate by the name aforesaid having a perpetual succession and a Common Seal, with capacity to purchase and hold, sell, or dispose of property and land for the purposes of this Act.

4. The General Nursing Council shall consist of:—

Two persons to be appointed by His Majesty with the advice of his Privy Council, of whom one shall

be a registered medical practitioner, and one shall be a nurse;

Two Registered Medical Practitioners to be appointed by the General Council of Medical Education and Registration of the United Kingdom;

Six representatives of Educational Bodies, that is, the Nurse Training-Schools, who must be actively engaged in the teaching of nursing, one to be elected for Scotland and one for Ireland;

Three past or present Hospital Matrons to be appointed by the Matrons Council of Great Britain and Ireland;

One nurse to be appointed by the Queen Victoria's Jubilee Institute for Nurses;

One nurse to be appointed by the Royal British Nurses' Association;

Six nurses to be elected by the registered nurses resident in England and Wales;

Two nurses to be elected by the registered nurses resident in Scotland;

Two nurses to be elected by the registered nurses resident in Ireland; and of

A President who shall be a registered nurse, to be elected by the General Council.

The nurses appointed as aforesaid shall be eligible to be, and shall in due course be, registered under the provisions of this Act.

The constitution of this Council is a matter of primary importance, because, as will be seen by reference to Clause 12 (the Duties and Powers of the Council), it is made under the proposed Act the Governing Body of the nursing profession.

The essential principles incorporated in the formation of the Council should be carefully noted.

In accordance with established custom, the Government of the country must have representation on such a Council; provision is therefore made for the appointment of two nominees of the Privy Council.

As the work of nursing is so intimately connected with that of medicine, due recognition is accorded to the right of the medical profession to representation on the Council.

The educational bodies, the nurse training schools, which have control over nurses during the probationary period, and will be responsible for preparing them for examination by a Central Board, have a right to help to define the educational curriculum adopted by the Council.

Under this clause either Matrons, Medical Lecturers on the theory of nursing, or Sisters who are engaged in the practical instruction of probationers, would be eligible.

Hospital Matrons are given direct representation through the only organisation of Matrons—the Matrons' Council—thus securing to them a proportion of seats on the Governing Body, to which they might or might not be elected as Representatives of Educational Bodies, or as the Direct Representatives of the Registered Nurses.

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