

was impossible to get a vote upon it." The fact that nuns are generally all recruited in the peasant or servant class drew forth great clerical wrath to such a desideratum. Again, the Congress was wrathful at the idea of the appointment of hospital Matrons, the fear being based on their experience of religious superiors, who were all-powerful and mostly very ignorant. A definite step was the pronouncement of the Congress that certificates should be awarded after uniform training and examination in one of the hospitals of the Assistance Publique. It will thus be seen that nursing problems are much the same all the world over, and the value of international organisation, by means of which the nurses in countries which are less advanced and organised can take counsel with their more progressive sisters, is obvious.

IN THE COLONIES.

In New South Wales a Matrons' Council has been formed, which will, no doubt, prove of the same practical value to the superintendents of nurse-training schools in that country as the similar societies in this country and the United States.

REGISTRATION.

The most burning and vital question of the day is the Registration question. In Great Britain, the Society for the State Registration of Trained Nurses has been actively engaged in forwarding the movement, and has drawn up a Bill with this object, which it is hoped to introduce into the House of Commons next Session. The Executive Committee of the Royal British Nurses' Association, after a lapse of seven years, have once again given their adhesion to the Registration principle, and are privately drafting a Bill for its enforcement. Meanwhile the work is done, and the Association would have proved its genuine desire to help the movement had it decided to give its support to the Bill which the nurses have already themselves prepared.

Stimulus has undoubtedly been given to the Registration movement by the brisk correspondence which, by the courtesy of the Editor of the *British Medical Journal*, took place in its columns in the autumn, and which proved conclusively that, while eminent medical men were ready to come forward and support trained nurses in their demand for professional organisation in the most liberal spirit, not one of the many thousands of the medical supporters of that widely-read journal had a word to say against the principle of the movement.

In New Zealand, as we record in another column, the Nurses' Registration Act is working smoothly, its practical administration being in the hands of Mrs. Grace Neill. The advantages of the Act are already being felt, not only by the nurses, but also by the medical profession and the public.

In the United States, Acts for the Registration of Nurses have been passed and come into force in

four of the States. In a fifth (Illinois) a Bill was passed, but failed to become law as the Governor refused his signature.

THE MIDWIVES' BILL.

The Regulations framed by the Central Midwives' Board for carrying the Midwives' Act into effect have this year received the assent of the Privy Council. It appears that some dissatisfaction is felt in Ireland that under the Act (which applies only to England and Wales) Irish midwives are not eligible, without further experience, to register in this country. We are well aware that the training in some of the Irish maternity hospitals is admirable in many ways. At the same time, the two provisions of the English Act which exclude Irish midwives are essential in the public interest. Each woman presenting herself for examination must personally deliver twenty cases of labour, and attend the same number for ten days after confinement. In our opinion, no lower standard could be laid down with safety, and the organisation of Irish maternity hospitals must be brought into conformity with the Act, or Irish midwives wishing to practise in this country must obtain the necessary additional experience.

ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE WAR.

The result of the evidence taken by the Royal Commission on the War in South Africa has been to prove the wisdom of those who for years have urged that our Army Nursing system was in need of re-organisation. It requires courage to point out deficiencies when those in authority consider the arrangements in force all that can be desired, but those who drew attention to the defects of the late Army Nursing Service have proved themselves true patriots, and the best friends of the British soldier.

THE NURSING SERVICES.

Important events in connection with the Nursing Services have been the confirmation of the provisional appointment of Miss Sidney Browne as Matron-in-Chief of the Military Nursing Service, and the formation of a Nursing Board, of which Miss C. G. Loch, R.R.C., and Miss M. Herbert are members, to advise the Secretary of State for India in the selection of candidates for the Indian Nursing Service. It is regrettable that under the new Regulations of the Naval Nursing Service a similar board has not been created.

The announcement of the institution of a pass examination for Matrons in connection with the Military Nursing Service is most encouraging. Evidence of having passed such an examination will, no doubt, eventually be required of all aspirants for Matrons' posts, and no greater evidence of the progress made in nursing matters in the Army could be offered than that the Military Nursing Service, which formerly stood for all that is obsolete, should have led the way in this country on this important point.

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