

Your Committee further recommend that the examination be held at and by the training-school.

Note.—This introduces a new element into the qualification for registration other than the examinations of the Central Council. For to nurses who are promoting the State Registration movement, it is a matter of primary importance that there should be one portal to their profession—namely, the uniform examinations of the Central Council.

This is the plan adopted wherever Registration is enforced by law—in Cape Colony, in Natal, in New Zealand, in the United States, and by other voluntary Associations in New South Wales and Victoria. The Central Midwives' Board in this country has also established its uniform examination, no lying-in hospital certificates, notwithstanding the acknowledged excellence of the training in some institutions, being recognised as a qualification for Registration.

Again, there are at present about twenty portals to the medical profession, although, as Sir Victor Horsley told the Committee, there is a certain consonance of opinion amongst the examining bodies under the Act of 1886, so that there is a minimum examination demanded by the State. Yet the difference between the various qualifications is so wide that the British Medical Association has for years endeavoured to effect a State examination for entry to the medical profession in order to take away the artificial co-ordination under the Act of 1886.

If the medical profession find so great a disadvantage in a comparatively few portals, what would be the position of the nursing profession with at least 500? Moreover, this would not touch the question of smaller and special hospitals which can, under a system of affiliation, afford valuable education in certain directions, but no one of which could rank as affording a complete training. Clearly a central system of examination must be instituted if the special and smaller general hospitals are to obtain probationers, and also if much valuable training is not to be wasted, and an efficient standard of nursing is to be effectually maintained.

Dr. Langley Browne, in his evidence, told the Committee that the question of uniformity of training was involved in the registration question. "In a great many of the provincial hospitals," he said, "we want them to level-up their training to a certain standard; with the registration of nurses would come the inspection and the training at all these hospitals, and a large number of them would improve enormously in their training. The two things go together. It is only a State-appointed body that the provincial hospitals and the different Boards would take notice of. They would not take notice of anybody else; but if there were a Council appointed by the State and they said, 'We will not recognise your hospital unless you conform to so many conditions, give a certain number of lectures, and so on,' then we should get a very much better system than we have now—indefinitely better."

It is certain that if the certificates of all these institutions were recognised, and no uniform State examination imposed, much of the educational value of a Registration Act would be minimised.

THE ONE PORTAL SYSTEM.

The one portal system to recognition as a professional nurse was advocated by Dr. Bedford Fenwick, Sir James Crichton Browne, Sir Victor Horsley, Dr. Hyla Greves, Professor White, Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, Miss

Isla Stewart, Miss Amy Hughes, Miss Huxley, Miss Forrest, Miss Hobbs, and others.

On the other hand, Sir Henry Burdett confused the Committee, either ignorantly, or of malice prepense, by leading them to believe that the recognition by the Central Nursing Council of the certificate of the training-schools would be to follow the precedent set in the case of the medical profession, whereas, of course, there is no similarity. The medical qualifications for registration accepted by the General Medical Council are those of various Colleges, none of the medical schools having any power to grant diplomas to students who study in their wards. The Nursing Profession has, on the contrary, no College in which its own interests are gathered up and centred, although no doubt the establishment of such a College would be one outcome of the establishment of Registration by the State.

PROVISION FOR EXISTING NURSES.

6. Any person who within two years from the commencement of the Act claims to be certified thereunder shall be so certified provided such person is at least twenty-one years of age, and (1) holds a 'three years' certificate of training from a hospital approved by the Council, and is of good character; or (2) produces evidence of training satisfactory to the Council, and has been for at least three years in *bond-fide* practice as a nurse, and is of good character.

With regard to existing nurses your Committee are of opinion that those who can produce evidence satisfactory to the Central Body both as regards efficiency and character should be placed upon the Register on payment of the registration fee.

Note.—It will thus be seen that both on the part of the promoters of the Bill and of the Select Committee there is every desire that justice should be done to those nurses who, although they may not have attained to the standard laid down for the future, have done good work in the past. No such nurses, indeed, need have the least fear that their work and worth will not receive the recognition to which they are entitled.

NURSING BY UNREGISTERED PERSONS.

7. This Act shall not be construed to affect or apply to the gratuitous nursing of the sick by friends or members of a family, and also it shall not apply to any person attending the sick for hire, but who does not in any way assume to be a registered nurse.

The Committee stated that, while it is not desirable to prohibit unregistered persons from nursing for gain no person should be entitled to assume the designation of "Registered Nurse" whose name is not upon the Register.

FINANCE.

The question of finance is so important that we shall devote a separate article to it in our next issue.

PRINCIPAL SUGGESTIONS LAID BEFORE COMMITTEE.

In relation to the principal suggestions laid before the Committee:—(a) Registration of individual nurses; (b) Registration of Training-schools for nurses; (c) Licensing of Nursing Homes, Institutions, and Societies which supply or employ nurses, they (a) support the principle of the registration of individual nurses, (b) consider the Council should decide what constitutes a recognised training-school for nurses, and for this purpose should have the power of inspection; (c) hold that the licensing of homes and institutions is highly desirable, and that the licence should be issued by the county or county borough authority.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)