

Progress of State Registration.

On Thursday, March 14th, the "Bill to Regulate the Qualifications of Trained Nurses, and to provide for their Registration," promoted by the Society for the State Registration of Trained Nurses, was introduced into the House of Commons by Mr. R. C. Munro Ferguson, M.P., and read for the first time this Session.

The Parliamentary Committee of the Medico-Psychological Association is drafting a Petition for the Registration of Mental Nurses in a separate Register. We think the Asylum nurses will be taking a false step if they do not endeavour to identify themselves as far as possible with hospital trained nurses, by inclusion in the general registration scheme, on a supplementary Register as suggested by the Select Committee of the House of Commons, rather than as a class apart.

We are glad to observe during the past week the publication by the *Daily Mirror* and the *Morning Leader* of articles on State Registration. The more the lay press gives publicity to this question, the more the public will realise not only the dangers they incur

IN NEW ZEALAND.

The New Zealand correspondent of the *Lancet* draws the attention of British nurses to some parts of the law which control the registration of nurses in that colony. He writes: "Very often considerable disappointment is experienced by a nurse arriving from the Old Country when she finds that, although she may have had hospital training and may have been in practice for some years, she cannot get on the Register here. It would seem, judging from the number of applications made, that there are many capable nurses practising in Britain who have not put in three years' training at one individual hospital. They have spent, say, two years at one and perhaps one or more at another, but the Act which is now in force here requires them to have spent *three years at one hospital*. It would be well for all nurses intending to come out to New Zealand to consider carefully whether their educational course has been such as to permit them to register in the colony."

He goes on to say that "the resignation of the Assistant Inspector-General of Hospitals, Mrs. Grace Neill, marks the close of a Departmental career which has been justly termed "excellent." Mrs. Neill was the first lady appointed to this position, and since then she has done a large amount of excellent work. "The Nurses' Registration Act" was largely

the result of her efforts and the establishment of the State maternity homes may also be credited to her."

The fact that many nurses in this country are unable to supply evidence of having attained the standard of nursing education required by one of our colonies must afford food for reflection. Until we have a system of registration in this country, and, following it, reciprocity with others in which similar systems are in force, we can no longer claim to be in the van of nursing progress. Moreover, as the ill-trained and inefficient can no longer exploit the sick in our Colonies, the public at home will be at their mercy more than ever.

IN THE UNITED STATES.

The *American Journal of Nursing* is naturally jubilant on the Registration question, and well it may be, when it is able to announce thus early in the session successful legislation for the State Registration of Nurses in three more States—New Hampshire, West Virginia, and the District of Columbia.

"With the New Hampshire and West Virginia nurses victory came quickly with the first effort, and this speaks volumes for the intelligence and justice of the legislatures of these States.

"In the District of Columbia the nurses have suffered defeat two or three times, but still worked on in spite of discouraging obstacles, and in this final victory they have demonstrated that national legislation is not impossible, but that with a just cause and persistent, determined effort it may be accomplished. All of these new laws contain the essential features for satisfactory administration.

BILLS NOW UNDER CONSIDERATION.

"The States of Illinois, Michigan, and Iowa are again to the front, and Minnesota has also an excellent Bill before the Legislature. Pennsylvania has a Bill in the field, and although such great concessions have been made that it has lost its broad educational and professional value, still, as last year, the Bill is meeting with very bitter opposition. Much of this opposition comes, we have reason to believe, from correspondence and short-course schools, and these and other influences make just legislation seem impossible. We believe it is always better to suffer defeat than to accept a law that lowers the standards of nursing education in the broadest sense. One may hope and work on with no law at all, but with a statute that defeats the highest ideals, stagnation and retrogression will be sure to follow."

We quite agree with our contemporary that a bad Bill is worse than none.

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