

THE INTER-DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE ON NURSING SERVICES.

INTERIM REPORT.

The Interim Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Nursing Services has now been published by the Ministry of Health and Board of Education, and can be obtained from His Majesty's Stationery Office, Kingsway, price 1s. 6d. net.

Members of the Committee.

- The Rt. Hon. the EARL OF ATHLONE, K.G., G.C.B., G.C.M.G., G.C.V.O., D.S.O. (*Chairman*).
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 C. W. Maudslay, Esq., C.B., Principal Assistant Secretary, Board of Education.
 Sir Frederick Menzies, K.B.E., M.D., LL.D., F.R.C.P., K.H.P., County Medical Officer of Health, London.
 Miss E. M. Musson, C.B.E., R.R.C., LL.D., S.R.N., Chairman, General Nursing Council for England and Wales.
 R. H. P. Orde, Esq., B.A., Hon. Secretary, British Hospitals Association.
 Gilbert E. Orme, Esq., M.A., M.B., Ch.B., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., medical practitioner, interested in nursing questions.
 Professor R. M. F. Picken, B.Sc., M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H., Welsh National School of Medicine.
 Miss D. M. Smith, S.R.N., Matron, Middlesex Hospital.
 W. Rees Thomas, Esq., M.D., B.S., F.R.C.P., D.P.M., Medical Senior Commissioner, Board of Control.
 Miss Frances Wakeford, S.R.N., S.C.M., Staff Nurse, Kingston and District Hospital, on the Surrey County Council.
 H. M. Walton, Esq., M.A., Director of Education, Middlesex County Council.
 Sir Weldon Dalrymple-Champneys, Bt., M.A., D.M., B.Ch., D.P.H., F.R.C.P.; W. A. B. Hamilton, Esq., *Secretaries*.

Terms of Reference.

"To inquire into the arrangements at present in operation with regard to the recruitment, training, registration, and terms and conditions of service of persons engaged in nursing the sick, and to report whether any changes in those arrangements or any

other measures are expedient for the purpose of maintaining an adequate service both for institutional and for domiciliary nursing."

The Report is presented to the Rt. Hon. Walter E. Elliot, M.C., M.P., Minister of Health, and the Rt. Hon. Earl De La Warr, P.C., Minister of the Board of Education, by the Committee of which the Rt. Hon. the Earl of Athlone, K.G., G.C.B., G.C.M.G., G.C.V.O., D.S.O., is Chairman, and Sir Weldon Dalrymple-Champneys, Bart., M.A., F.R.C.P., etc., and W. A. B. Hamilton, Esq., Joint Secretaries.

It will be remembered that great indignation was aroused by the refusal of the then Minister of Health, Sir Kingsley Wood, to grant representation on the Committee to any representative of the Nurses' Organisations, and that only four members of the College of Nursing were appointed on a Committee of 21 persons, members of the laity and the medical profession.

No surprise, therefore, will result from the proposal to degrade the Nursing Profession by the recognition of untrained persons to be placed on a statutory Roll, who must inevitably depreciate its economic stability.

A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE REPORT FROM THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH.

We have received the following brief Summary of the Report from the Ministry of Health:—

Certain of the Committee's recommendations affect all branches of the nursing service (except mental nursing, which will be dealt with in a further Report) but in the main the Report is concerned with the conditions of service of nurses in hospitals and institutions. Suggestions are made for the improvement of conditions of service, including salaries, pensions, and hours of work, and the Report also deals with the pre-nursing education of the intending nurse, the division of the Preliminary State Examination and the establishment under statute of a second grade of nurse.

The following is a brief summary of the more important of the Committee's conclusions and recommendations:

- (1) An acute shortage of nurses, trained and untrained, exists in the hospitals throughout the country.
- (2) To attract recruits in sufficient numbers the status of the profession should be improved and it should be recognised as a service of outstanding national importance, and essential reforms carried out on this basis.
- (3) The salaries of nurses, particularly after they have had some years of service, are too low, and the establishment of Committees to regulate nurses' salaries on a national basis is recommended.
- (4) The standard hours of work in all hospitals should be reduced to 96 per fortnight.
- (5) Pensions for nurses should be universal and interchangeable between all branches of the service.
- (6) Some development of the system of grants from public funds to hospitals seems necessary in order to enable hospitals to meet the cost of implementing the Committee's recommendations; but the Committee are not unanimous on the extent, source, or method of administration of these grants.
- (7) The minimum age at which probationers should be recruited for work in the wards of a general hospital should be 18 years and no girl should be admitted as a

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