

nurses, and several of the professional associations think that it is also a deterrent to recruitment." The difficulty was, however, to find a satisfactory alternative, bearing in mind that there were two statutory nursing qualifications based on different standards of training between which it was essential to distinguish clearly. In the Committee's view the title "State Enrolled Nurse," which some of the associations had suggested, would fail to make this distinction clear. But they themselves had been unable to think of any alternative which would be both satisfactory and generally acceptable. So at this stage they did not recommend any change in the existing title.

#### Promotion.

One of the main reasons why enrolled assistant nurses leave the profession to take up some other work was the lack of promotion prospects. Because of the shortage of registered nurses in some hospitals an assistant nurse may act as ward sister or staff nurse, particularly in chronic sick wards, yet she had only the status of her own grade. The Committee felt that if she was in fact capable of holding a more senior post it would seem reasonable that she should have a chance of promotion to that grade with the title perhaps of "Senior Assistant Nurse." They recommend that this should be considered in cases where a nurse who had served in a special field of nursing, such as chronic sick or tuberculosis, might merit promotion.

The situation in Scotland is being considered separately by a sub-committee of the Scottish Nursing and Midwifery Advisory Committee.

#### As We See It.

How revealing is a study of this Report of the inevitable disastrous confusion and chaos now prevailing in the nursing profession today! Consequent upon the passing of the Nursing Acts, 1943.

This Act brought into force the recognition of semi-trained persons—the assistant nurse, by the creation of a State Roll of assistant nurses.

From the time of the passing of The Nurses Registration Act, 1919, nurse training steadily improved its standards to a high degree, and consequently earned the esteem and gratitude of the public. But alas! this desirable progress was checked in consequence of the 1943 legislation.

In reference to this Act we recall the opinion expressed in the Report of "The Working Party on the Recruitment and Training of Nurses" concerning the assistant nurse—"There are two schools of thought, the first holds that the introduction of assistant nurses was a retrograde step, no more defensible than would be the introduction of assistant doctors permitted to practise, a system long since abolished, and that all duties connected with the patient should be performed by a State Registered Nurse relieved entirely of domestic duties by ward maids or ward orderlies."

The fact that it was laid down that the training of Student Nurses for State Registration, and the instruction of Pupil Assistant Nurses for Enrolment, be carried on in separate hospitals or in separate parts of the same hospital, inspected by the General Nursing Council, such legislation (as those who stoutly opposed the passing of the Act pointed out), enforces intolerable class distinction, introducing in a work of mercy violation of the Christian law, the law of humanity, justice and equity.

In our opinion, this invidious distinction in the nursing work between the student nurse and the assistant nurse can only lead to dissatisfaction detrimental to the

training of both, and owing, therefore, to the injustice of the scheme, this untenable position cannot be remedied by "good will and careful administration."

In the policy of the present time there is an apparent determination to assign to the assistant nurse in particular the nursing of the chronic sick. We are of the opinion that in excluding from the training of the student nurse such fundamental duties as are entailed in the nursing of the chronic sick—the foundation of all nursing skill—complete instruction cannot be obtained, without practice in this wrongly considered, derogatory, repetitive, and unnecessary experience.

The mistaken attitude of mind today, that these duties are not essential in the training of the student nurse, is depriving her of acquiring very valuable skill as a practical nurse to the detriment of the sick of all types of illness—indeed after many years of experience, and in view of the lamentable frequency of bed sore cases rather than exemption from such work, we would recommend that at least three months training in chronic sick nursing should be compulsory in her curriculum of general training.

In the conclusions enumerated on the Report of the Standing Nursing Advisory Committee of the position of the assistant nurse—in our opinion there is no solution to the unworkable and unjustifiable conditions laid down in the Nurses Acts of 1943, which introduced two standards of nurse training, and which are the fundamental cause of the bitter discontent and confusion prevailing in the nursing profession today. In our opinion the suggestion to return to the one portal of entrance into nurse training with the initial training revised, with more emphasis on the practical side of a nurses work, would rectify the present overweighting of the academic at the expense of the practical. Then perhaps Registered Nurses will be inspired to live down the scornful description of aspiring to be "little doctors." A.S.B.

## The New Year Honours.

(Concluded.)

### M.B.E.

Miss Kathleen Alexander, Nursing Sister, Lady Reading Hospital, Peshawar; Miss Brenda Murch, Matron, Athlone Hospital, Lobatse, Bechuanaland; Miss Catherine Roux, Maternity Nurse, Bulawayo, Southern Rhodesia; Miss F. M. Harmer, Nursing Sister, Northern Region, Nigeria; Miss E. C. Lowe, Chief Nursing Superintendent (Public Health) Jamaica; Mrs. M. Madeiros, Matron, Mental Hospital, Bermuda; Miss L. S. Grenion, Nurse Midwife, Leper Hospital, Mahaica, British Guiana; Miss Anna Purdoc, Staff Midwife, North Borneo; Miss Robina B. M. Darroch, Principal Sister Tutor, Royal Infirmary, Liverpool; Miss Annie Ferries, Senior Nursing Sister, Royal Arsenal, Woolwich, Ministry of Supply; Miss Catherine McKenna, Principal Sister, H.M. Prison, Holloway; Mrs. Gladys M. Pearson, Matron, Stapleton Hospital, Bristol; Miss Sarah E. Roberts, District Nurse Midwife, Portmadoc, Caernarvonshire; Miss Grace M. A. Simpson, Health Visitor, Camberwell and Lewisham; Mr. G. R. Stainer, Male Charge Nurse, Lewisham Hospital, London; Miss Annie E. Thornley, Matron, Jersey Maternity Hospital; Miss Mabel Williams, Sister, Calderstones Mental Hospital, Whalley, Blackburn; Miss Jessie A. Wright, Sister-in-charge, Casualty and Out Patients' Departments, Kent and Canterbury Hospital.

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