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THE Nursing Record

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Editorial.

THE ARMY NURSING SERVICE RESERVE.

THE War Office has issued revised regulations for the Army Nursing Service Reserve, from which it may be assumed that those in force up to the present time have not proved wholly satisfactory. We consider that those now issued are not calculated to commend themselves to the heads of the nursing profession, with whom the Army Nursing Reserve Committee would have done well to take counsel before venturing to lay down regulations for the control of so important a branch of a professional service. It is time indeed that the names of those persons who form the Committee of the Army Nursing Reserve should be made public, for as this branch of the Army Nursing Service is a public and governmental one, the nation has a right to know who controls it, and therefore who is responsible for its efficiency or inefficiency.

Under the new rules, as heretofore, candidates for appointment must not be under 25 or over 35 years of age. This rule, however, may presumably be relaxed at the discretion of the Committee, for it has certainly not been adhered to during the present war, neither is there any reason why nurses of over 35 years of age should not render good service.

They will be required to sign a declaration of willingness, in the event of war, to accept service, if called upon to do so, in a military hospital in the United Kingdom, a necessary regulation, as it is evident that it would be most unfair that the Regular Sisters should be superseded by the Reserve, which must always be a subordinate branch of the Army Nursing Service. It would have been well had the position of the Reserve been clearly explained to its members in the first place.

A certificate of three years' training and service in a civil hospital is the qualification required, a regretably low maximum, when the three years' standard of training is now so widely recognized as the lowest compatible with efficiency.

Two recent testimonials of efficiency in medical and surgical nursing are required from medical officers, while the matron of the hospital in which the candidate has served is required to furnish a recommendation certifying to her tact, temper, and ability. No official enquiry is sent directly by the Army Nursing Reserve Committee to the Superintendents of Nursing asking for information as to the nursing qualifications of aspirants for appointment as members of the Reserve. The professional status of trained nursing is thus overridden by the Reserve Committee, and we do not hesitate to say that the contemptuous attitude adopted

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