

training-schools. All our readers will appreciate the difficulties of the task thus to be entrusted to the Nursing Council, and also the diverse opinions which will be expressed on the latter point. But, of course, if Parliament decides that certain hospitals shall be permitted to certificate their own pupils, and that such certificates shall be accepted for Registration, it would be a necessary consequence that the Nursing Council should inspect those training-schools, and thus satisfy themselves that the education and examination of the nurses in such Schools were in every way satisfactory and sufficient. But one practical difficulty is that this system would still leave the problem of certificating nurses trained by the smaller general hospitals, by the Poor Law infirmaries, and by special Hospitals, unsolved.

The opinion of the Select Committee that "existing nurses" who can produce satisfactory evidence of efficiency and character should be placed on the Register simply on payment of the registration fee, merely carries out the principle always adopted by Parliament, in similar cases, in order to prevent any injustice to existing workers. The annual publication of the Nursing Register, and the power given to the Central Body to strike off the Register the names of nurses who have died, or who have been guilty of serious misconduct or moral delinquency, are necessary consequences of the institution of Registration.

Finally, the Committee consider that a separate Register should be kept for Asylum nurses; and it is interesting to observe that the Committee advise that, in their case, there should be a central examination—that of the Medico-Psychological Association. It is not quite evident why Asylum nurses should be required to pass a central examination, while those engaged in general nursing may be certificated by the hospital which has educated them.

The registering of Nursing Homes and Institutions is also recommended by the Committee, and so far as the former are concerned, there is no doubt that such a course would be of the greatest value and protection to the public. Altogether, we congratulate the whole Nursing Profession on this most important and historical Report. We commend it to their very earnest consideration, and we venture to hope that, during the coming autumn and winter, it may lead to Conferences being held, amongst all who desire the good of Nursing in this country, to decide what would really be the wisest and broadest lines of legislation.

The Report of the Select Committee on the Registration of Nurses.

THE SELECT COMMITTEE appointed to consider the expediency of providing for the REGISTRATION OF NURSES:—HAVE agreed to the following REPORT:—

1. THE Select Committee on the Registration of Nurses was appointed in June, 1904, and was re-appointed during the present Session of Parliament.

2. YOUR COMMITTEE have examined 34 witnesses, among whom are included members of the medical profession, matrons of hospitals, superintendents of nursing institutions, nurses whose experience has been gained abroad as well as nurses who carry on their occupation in this country, a representative of the male nurses, representatives of various institutions and public bodies, including the Civil Service, besides ladies and gentlemen who are not professionally employed but who have given much time and work to the management of hospitals and asylums, and to the study of nursing questions both in the centres of population and in the rural districts.

3. Amidst many divergent views met with in this evidence, there is a general opinion in favour of some change in the conditions under which nursing is carried on.

4. Your Committee have observed this tendency in the evidence of the medical profession and in that of the nurses themselves.

5. The evidence shows that a considerable improvement has taken place of late, both in the class of persons who undertake nursing and in the conditions under which they obtain their training and carry on their occupation.

6. It has been asserted in some quarters that registration is rendered requisite by reason of the amount of illegality, immorality and scandal which at present continues undiscovered and unchecked. It is contended that registration would be an efficient instrument against these scandals, and would safeguard the public. In the judgment of your Committee, while registration might prove a means towards checking some abuses, no evidence which has been brought forward substantiates a general charge of moral delinquency.

7. On the other hand, there is a general concurrence of opinion that in the interests of the nurses and of the public further improvement is both desirable and practicable; and your Committee consider that the desire for co-ordination of the various training-schools, although not universal, is widespread.

8. Upon the question of what changes in the conditions of nursing are desirable strong opinions are held, and vigorous expression has been given to them.

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