

Appointed by the Asylum Workers' Association. One person, either a Medical Practitioner or a nurse.

A President to be elected from amongst its members by the Council when fully constituted.

The Central Body should consist of Matrons, Nurses, and Representatives of the Medical Profession of Training-Schools for Nurses and of the Public. Your Committee consider it desirable that the number of representatives should be kept within reasonable limits; they suggest eleven as a convenient number and recommend that it should never exceed fifteen.

Note.—It will thus be seen that the Committee recommend a considerable reduction in the number of members of the Central Council. The framers of the Nurses' Bill were influenced by two motives in the number they suggested. (1) The appointment of a Board representative of all the principal interests involved, and (2) the need of a Board sufficiently large to admit of the appointment of sub-Committees to deal with special departments so that the expedition of business might be facilitated. No one who has watched the proceedings of the Central Midwives' Board, which governs a much smaller number of persons than a Nursing Council will be called upon to control, can fail to realise that its work will be extremely onerous. Further, the Midwives' Board has upon it no midwife in active work, all the midwife members being ladies of leisure who give a considerable portion of their time to the work of the Board. If, as is highly desirable, Matrons in active practice are to take part in the work of the Council, it must be remembered that they are already paid officials of the institutions to which they are attached, and if more than a certain proportion of their time is given up to this public service their employers may reasonably object.

If these difficulties can be got over, a small Council has certain advantages, and the work of such a Council might be augmented by the appointment of inspectors and examiners, not necessarily members of the Council. The essential point is that in the constitution of any Council, provision should be made for the adequate and direct representation of the registered nurses themselves.

In regard to the representation of the training-schools for nurses, the fact must not be overlooked that the main function of the Council will be to deal with educational matters involving very technical points, and for this reason the Nurses' Bill recognised the right of the training-schools to representation through medical practitioners attached to these institutions as teachers or lecturers. The recognition of training-schools by other means is a point which requires, and will no doubt receive, careful consideration by the Society for the State Registration of Trained Nurses.

The representation of the public is a point which, we think, there will be no difficulty in conceding.

ESTABLISHMENT OF A REGISTER.

4. "The Council shall . . . appoint a Registrar . . . It shall be the duty of the Registrar to keep a correct Register of trained nurses, to be called 'The Nursing Register,' and to erase the names of all registered persons who shall have died, and from time to time to make the necessary alterations in the addresses or qualifications of the persons registered under the Act."

It is also provided that the Council has power "To decide upon the suspension or removal from the regis-

ter of the name of any trained nurse for any breach of the rules and regulations from time to time laid down under this Act by the Council, or for conduct disgraceful in a professional respect, and also to decide upon the restoration to the Register of the name of any trained nurse so suspended or removed."

"There should be an annual publication of the Register of Nurses. For this purpose the Central Body should make provision for striking off the Register the names of those nurses who have died or who have ceased nursing, and also of those nurses who in the opinion of the Central Body have been guilty of serious misconduct in the discharge of their duty, or of moral delinquency."

Note.—It will be noted that the Bill provides for the removal of a nurse from the Register only in case of death or misconduct, while the Committee suggest in addition the removal of the names of those not in active practice. This we consider is a mistake. Neither in the case of medical practitioners nor midwives has this course been adopted, and we think the suggestion must have been made owing to the tardy death of the notion that in some way the Register will form a medium for the direct supply of nurses to the public. As a matter of fact, as Sir Victor Horsley pointed out, "all the certificate of registration says is that the person is properly trained," and again, "if an individual has gone through a long course of training to acquire expert knowledge, that individual is justified in requiring from the State the registration of the fact; and unless the individual misbehaves in any way, that registration remains good. A person does not lose his knowledge." Why, for instance, should the Director-General of the Army, when he retires, remain on his professional Register, and the Matron-in-Chief of the Military Nursing Service be removed from hers under similar circumstances? Incidentally we may point out that a retired Matron-in-Chief would thus be rendered illegible as a member of the Council, whereas, her experience and leisure might make her most desirable in this position. It would be quite sufficient to put a note against the entry of such a name "retired" or "not in active practice since —"; but it would be an injustice to remove the name from the Register. Further, a nurse may for personal reasons give up active work for several years and then resume it. Must she apply for re-Registration and pay a second Registration fee on each such occasion?

If the practice of removal from the Register on the cessation of active work were enforced under the Midwives' Act, not one of the midwives who now have seats on the Board would be eligible for office as such.

CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION.

5. It is also provided in the Bill that amongst the duties and powers of the Council shall be "to frame rules . . . (b) regulating the issue of certificates and the conditions of admissions to the Register of Trained Nurses; (c) regulating the course of training, and the conduct of examinations, and the remuneration of the examiners."

"Your Committee recommend that the Central Body should admit to the Register of Nurses such nurses as have had a training at a recognised training-school for nurses for a period to be determined by such body, and have satisfied their training-school, whose certificate they must hold, stating that they are equipped with the knowledge and experience requisite for nursing, and that they are of good character."

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