

The Nurses' Bill in the House of Lords.

On Tuesday last, July 21st, the first business in the Orders for the day in the House of Lords after the conclusion of formal business was the consideration of the Nurses' Registration Bill, which was discussed by the Committee of the whole House. The Society for the State Registration of Trained Nurses, whose Bill Lord Ampthill has, so successfully, introduced and piloted in the House of Lords, had received some days ago a series of Amendments, to be moved by the Earl of Crewe, and as Lord Crewe is Leader of the House, these amendments were virtually put forward in the name of the Government.

THE GOVERNMENT AMENDMENTS.

Setting aside the verbal amendments, the chief alterations proposed by the Government are as follows:—

There is to be no term in which the Council, which it is proposed shall consist of fifteen persons, is provisional.

It is constituted in the first instance as follows:—

Three persons to be appointed by the Privy Council, one of whom shall be a woman.

Six Registered Medical Practitioners.

Six Nurses.

The nurses are to be appointed as suggested in the Nurses' Bill. Two by the Matrons' Council, one by Queen Victoria's Jubilee Institute, one by the Royal British Nurses' Association, one by the Asylum Workers' Association, and one by the Society for the State Registration of Trained Nurses. When a sufficient number of nurses have been registered they are to form a constituency to elect the six direct nurse representatives on the Council, in the place of the six nominees.

NEW CLAUSES.

1. A new Clause is proposed, presumably to keep Registered Nurses in touch with the Registration Office as follows:—

"There shall also be payable on or before the thirty-first day of January in each year by every registered nurse a fee of two shillings and sixpence, and if any nurse in any year makes default in paying such fee, his or her name shall be removed from the register, but may be restored on payment of a fee not exceeding five shillings, and on proof that the failure was due to inadvertence or mistake, or on giving other satisfactory explanations."

2. Another new Clause proposed runs:—

"If within four years from the commencement of this Act the Council make a represen-

tation to that effect to his Majesty, his Majesty may by Order in Council authorise the Council to institute a register of nurses, to be called associate nurses, having a lower standard of training than that required in the case of registered nurses, but nothing in this Act, or the Order, shall authorise any such nurse to use or take any name, title, addition, or description implying that he or she is certified under this Act, or is recognised as a registered nurse, except in combination with the word 'associate,' or to vote at any election of a direct representative of registered nurses."

3. The third new Clause proposed is as follows:—

"This Act shall not extend to Ireland, unless and until it is so extended by an Order in Council under this section, and it shall be lawful for his Majesty by Order in Council so to extend it, and the Order may provide for including amongst the members of the Council of a direct representative of registered nurses having a registered address in Ireland, and increasing the number of members of the Council accordingly, and making such other consequential adaptations of this Act as may appear necessary."

Lord Ampthill, in moving that the House should go into Committee on the Nurses' Registration Bill, stated that the Government had been good enough to devote very close attention to the Bill, and had given notice of a large number of amendments, the great majority of which he gratefully accepted, because they would undoubtedly increase the efficiency and practical working of the measure.

Lord Mayo strongly supported the principle of the Bill, but wished to move an amendment to the effect that the Certificates of Nurses found guilty of an offence in a Court of Law should be endorsed with that conviction. He objected very strongly to Ireland being left out of the Bill.

Lord Crewe suggested that the amendments standing in his name should all be accepted to save the time of the House. The omission of Ireland from the Bill was only provisional.

Lord Ampthill said that course was the one he had agreed with Lord Crewe should be adopted. Then the few amendments to which he objected could be separately discussed on another occasion, and especially he hoped the Government would consent to include Ireland in the Bill again.

Lord Ashbourne said he could not see the vestige of a reason for excluding Ireland, and he earnestly hoped the Government would reconsider this.

Lord Kinnaird, Lord Salisbury, and Lord

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