

### Registration in Scotland.

Since the Nurses' Registration Bill, in the able charge of Lord Amptill, passed through the House of Lords on November 10th last, it has claimed the attention of many who so far have taken no active part in the movement for the legal registration of Trained Nurses, and we are glad that Medical Superintendents and Matrons of Hospitals in Scotland outside Edinburgh are now giving serious consideration to the question, as Scottish nurses have never organised, as their English and Irish colleagues have done, and have no Association through which they can express their views. An influential Registration Committee in Edinburgh, of which Miss E. S. Haldane, LL.D., is Chairman, has, however, kept in touch with the Committee of the Society for the State Registration of Trained Nurses, but neither the Matrons nor the medical men connected with hospitals in Glasgow and other large centres have taken any active part in either interesting the nurses, or educating the public, on this most important question.

As recently as December 10th a meeting was convened in Edinburgh at which fourteen medical men from Edinburgh and Glasgow, and twelve Matrons from these cities were present. At this meeting the terms of the Nurses' Registration Bill were discussed, and the meeting agreed that Registration was desirable, and indeed inevitable, but considered that the work of training nurses would be very much better done if a separate Registration authority were constituted in each country. A small Committee was appointed and requested to draw up a scheme of Registration suitable for Scotland, and to report at a future meeting.

This Committee, the membership of which is not made public, presented its report at a further meeting held in Edinburgh on January 30th, and its report with an explanatory introduction, and the Bill which it considers suitable for Scotland, have now been published in pamphlet form. The report of the Committee is as follows:—

#### REPORT OF COMMITTEE REGARDING THE REGISTRATION OF NURSES IN SCOTLAND.

As instructed, we have carefully considered the question of the Registration of Nurses in Scotland with special reference to the Bill now before Parliament.

We have assumed that those engaged in the nursing profession are of opinion that State Registration is desirable, and that, sooner or later, it is inevitable. In these circumstances it remained for us to consider the form which such Registration should take.

It seemed to us to be very undesirable that the registration, and, as a necessary consequence, the training of Scottish nurses, should be controlled by a Registration Council whose headquarters would be in London. In the scheme of the Bill which has passed the House of Lords, Scotland is most inadequately represented on that Council, and we anticipate that, if the Bill became law, the training, education, and status of Scottish nurses would be adversely affected by the fact that the Council would be alien in interests and sympathy to Scottish nursing. We also think that, having regard to the excellence of the training given to nurses in the leading hospitals, the proposal to make examination by the Registration Council an essential qualification for registration is unnecessary, and would place an undue burden and expense on candidates for registration, and, further, would tend to create the impression that the main object to be aimed at in training a nurse was to enable her to pass such examination. In our opinion it would be preferable to leave examinations, as far as possible, in the hands of the training schools, the Registration Council reserving such powers of supervision as would enable the Council to secure an adequate standard of attainment on the part of applicants for registration. We attach significance to the fact that our view of this very important question coincides with the recommendation of the Select Committee which reported to Parliament in 1905 on the question of State Registration.

We are strongly of opinion that the fee of five guineas which it is proposed to charge for examination and registration is much too high when account is taken of the fact that the majority of those who are to be called upon to pay this fee will probably be in receipt of very small salaries. In our view, the payment of such a fee would inflict on nurses a hardship that would hardly be counterbalanced by the gain derived from registration.

Having formed these conclusions, we cannot recommend the nursing profession in Scotland to adopt the Bill now before Parliament. It would, however, be improper for us to assume that this Bill is equally unsuitable for England, and, accordingly, we limit ourselves to recording our belief that Scotland does not desire to be associated with the scheme of that Bill. At the same time, we recommend that Parliament should be solicited to pass a Registration Bill (of which we append a draft) exclusively applicable to Scotland.

We are of opinion that the existence of a separate Registration Council in Scotland would stimulate and promote the training of Scottish nurses in a manner that a Registration Council sitting in London could not achieve. It also seems to us that all the advantages of a scheme of registration embracing the whole kingdom would be obtained by inserting in any Bill a clause providing that nurses registered in England or in Ireland should be held as registered in Scotland, and that nurses registered in Scotland should be held as registered in England or in Ireland.

In framing a Bill for Scotland, we have endeavoured to give fair representation on the Regis-

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