

Progress of State Registration.

A Scottish correspondent of the *British Medical Journal*, referring to a pamphlet published by the Association for the Promotion of the Registration of Nurses in Scotland, to which we shall refer again in a subsequent issue, says of the three Bills for the Registration of Nurses which have been introduced into Parliament:—

The chief differences seem to be that in the Scottish Bill the Registration Council represents the nurses, the training schools, the medical profession, the universities, and the Government departments, while in Lord Ampthill's Bill the Registration Council only represents the nurses. The Scottish Bill accepts for registration purposes the certificates of recognised training schools, and admits fever nurses and mental nurses to a special register; this Lord Ampthill's Bill does not do. The registration fee in the Scottish Bill is two guineas, while in the English it is five guineas. It will be unfortunate if some understanding is not come to by the promoters of the several Bills.

Members of the Society for the State Registration of Trained Nurses are aware that their Bill, which Lord Ampthill so successfully carried through the House of Lords last autumn, makes provision in the Clause constituting "a General Council for the Registration of nurses in the United Kingdom," for representatives appointed by the Privy Council, the Local Government Board, the General Medical Council, the British Medical Association (which is accorded three representatives), and the Medico-Psychological Association, nine persons in all besides the seven registered nurses to be elected by the registered nurses themselves. How is it possible to describe a Council so constituted as one which "only represents the nurses"? The Council proposed by the Scottish Bill, on the other hand, gives no representation to the British Medical Association, but provides seats for two Medical Superintendents nominated by the Secretary for Scotland.

The statement that Lord Ampthill's Bill makes no provision for a special register of mental nurses is disproved by reference to the Bill, and the statement that the registration fee in the Scottish Bill is two guineas and in the English Bill five is also misleading. The registration fee is identical in both Bills—two guineas. But Lord Ampthill's Bill provides for a central examination and an examination fee of three guineas, whereas the Scottish Bill proposes to Register nurses without a uniform independent examination, nevertheless this test must form the basis for the reciprocity proposed in the Scottish Bill. Equality of standards must precede reciprocity in professional recognition.

Legal Matters.

THE DEATHS AT HEMEL HEMPSTEAD INFIRMARY.

Mr. Lovell Smeathman, Coroner for the Hemel Hempstead District, concluded his inquiry on Thursday, October 14th, into the circumstances, which we related last week, attending the deaths of three inmates at the Hemel Hempstead Workhouse Infirmary. It was alleged that the doctor was not informed that the deceased men had had baths, which had been administered without his consent, and certificates of death were given in the usual way.

It will be remembered that the patient, Almond, died on the afternoon on which he was bathed, Howells within twenty minutes of his return from the bath-room, and Adams four days subsequently. The baths were given by a porter named Goodson on instructions received from Nurse Bellamy.

Nurse Bellamy was represented by Mr. J. Penny, solicitor.

Mr. Trowell, Master of the Workhouse, asked why he did not inform the doctor of Howell's bath, said he had not heard of it.

The Matron stated that the nurses received instructions from the doctor as to bathing regulations, and carried them out. They appealed to her in cases of difficulty.

Herbert Goodson, the porter, said that no nurse was present when he bathed the patients. The temperature of the three baths was 89½ degs. Dr. Herbert Love, Medical Officer, said that the temperature of the baths should not have been under 98 or 100 degs.

Nurse Bellamy confirmed her statement that the doctor's permission was given to bath Howells and Adams. She did not tell the porter what the temperature of the bath should be, as she had had no definite instructions.

Nurse Greenard said the nurses never tested the temperature of baths when the porter was there. He was a responsible officer like themselves. In reply to a juror the witness admitted friction between the Master and Matron and the nursing staff. They brought it before the Board, but the Board took no notice.

The Coroner (who is also Clerk to the Guardians) here interposed:—"That's untrue. You must not say the Board took no notice. They have told you that whilst the Master and Matron are in their position they must be obeyed. If you do not like it you have the remedy in your own hands."

Nurse Pillmore, the next witness, questioned by the Coroner as to the condition of the man Adams, said he was dying on the Thursday. Asked further why she did not communicate with the Master, Matron, or doctor, she said that the doctor saw him at 10 o'clock. She had never been told to.

THE VERDICT.

After deliberating for two hours the jury found that with regard to the death of Adams, Nurse Bellamy was guilty of culpable negligence in allowing the administration of the bath to a patient in his condition without sending for a doctor, and in taking no steps to supervise the bath and its temperature, or to give instructions to the porter. In

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