

NURSES' REGISTRATION (No. 2) BILL.

IN STANDING COMMITTEE.

The Nurses' Registration (No. 2) Bill was considered in Committee in the House of Commons on Tuesday, December 2nd, by Standing Committee B., Mr. T. P. O'Connor, M.P., in the chair.

AMENDMENTS.

In connection with the establishment of the General Nursing Council, CAPTAIN ELLIOT (Lanark) proposed the addition of the words "for England and Wales." As Scotland and Ireland are to have their own Bills, this was accepted by Dr. Addison.

SIR WATSON CHEYNE (Scottish Universities) proposed in connection with Clause 2, defining "a Register of Nurses," the substitution of the term "a Register of Trained Nurses for the sick." The insertion of the word "trained", was, he said a simple addition.

THE GENERAL PART OF THE REGISTER.

He further moved an amendment providing that the general part of the Register should contain the names of "all *fully-trained male and female nurses*."

DR. ADDISON objected to the insertion of the word "trained" in connection with the Register of Nurses. It was more far-reaching than his hon. Friend said. The general principle adopted in the Bill was that the standard of training was to be defined by the General Nursing Council. It would be inexpedient to introduce the word "trained" here, as then only those would be eligible for registration in the General Register who had attained a prescribed standard of training not yet defined.

In adopting any measure involving the establishment of standards, Parliament always safeguarded the interests of those in practice. Such nurses might be excluded from the Register if the Council to be set up decided, on instructions from Parliament, to admit only trained nurses to the Register in the first instance. It would be a pity to pledge the Council by passing this Clause, the effect of which would be to knock out many nurses in practice. He hoped his hon. Friend would not press this amendment. The motion for the insertion of the word "trained" before "nurses" was negatived, and the words "for the sick" after "nurses" inserted.

An amendment moved by Dr. Addison was accepted providing that the general part of the Register should include the names of all nurses "who satisfy the conditions of admission to that part of the register."

MR. JOHNSTONE (Renfrew, E.) moved an amendment to insert at the end of the Clause the words "including nurses trained in fevers and other infectious diseases," the effect of which would have been to make training in the nursing of infectious diseases only, an adequate qualification for the general register. The amendment was eventually withdrawn.

SUPPLEMENTARY PARTS OF THE REGISTER.

In connection with Clause 2 it was proposed by

Dr. Addison and agreed that "Where any person satisfies the conditions of admission to the register his name may be included in that part of the register, notwithstanding that it is also included in the general part."

Sir Watson Cheyne had put down a further series of amendments to Clause 2 (2) in regard to the establishment of Supplementary Registers of Nurses only trained in special branches of nursing, *viz.*, (1) Nurses trained in mental diseases; (2) nurses trained in fevers and other infectious diseases; (3) nurses trained in children's diseases; (4) nurses trained sufficiently for district nursing in out-lying parts of the kingdom; (5) persons of the classes referred to in Clause 3, page 3, section (2), paragraph (c) (6)—Any other prescribed class.

In regard to the Supplementary Register of mental nurses proposed in Dr. Addison's Bill, Sir Watson Cheyne said they were certainly not nurses, but attendants on the insane. At the present time an effort was being made to get mental patients under treatment quite early, and later there might be mental nurses.

Concerning the cottage or district nurses, Sir Watson Cheyne said they were of great value. They had a year or eighteen months' training, including midwifery, then they were handed over to the district nursing associations and after a few years they were certificated. These districts would have to pay more if they employed trained nurses. There were several institutions for providing cottage nurses in England, and he hoped there would be an extension of the district and cottage nursing system.

THE VIEWS OF THE MINISTER.

DR. ADDISON held that the insertion of the words "fully-trained male and female nurses" in relation to the general part of the Register was inappropriate, and he hoped it would not be pressed. (It was subsequently withdrawn.) A nurse was not disqualified if his or her name was on one part of the Register to have it entered on another part, provided that he or she had the necessary qualifications. That was a drafting point. But look at the structure of the Clause. His hon. Friend's amendments turned it upside down. The effect of the amendments was that many nurses now in practice would be excluded from the General Register, and come into separate Registers. They had for years been engaged in the general nursing of the sick, and it was not fair that they should be specially singled out as a lowly class by themselves.

Dr. Addison expressed the opinion that there was not much in the re-wording of the part of the Clause relating to special registers as proposed by his hon. Friend. The words standing in the Bill were as good as those now proposed; he thought they were better. A person who tumbled down a ladder might be a sick person, but no one could describe his condition as disease.

The "loose clause" covering the admission of existing nurses to the Register in the first instance had received most careful consideration.

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