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EDITORIAL.

BURNING QUESTIONS FOR NURSES.

As we have from time to time reported in this Journal, there are various questions of vital importance to the Nursing Profession incorporated in legislation, either now being considered by Parliament, or already embodied in Acts, as well as the Rules for their government under the General Nursing Councils in the three kingdoms.

THE UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE ACT.

This Act is already on the Statute Book, and, as will be seen in another column, it contains provisions which, unless radically amended, must be most obnoxious to nurses and detrimental to the profession. Unless a strong effort is made now by hospital committees, nurses' organisations, and nurses individually, to have nurses relieved of this unemployment tax, the Nursing Profession in the future will fail to recruit the well-educated type of woman, whom it is so necessary should be attracted to a profession for the prevention and cure of disease.

Nurses already detest the National Insurance Act, into which they have paid many thousands of pounds, and from which they have received little benefit. Now, if under the new Act they are to be required to make further payments—unless they possess an assured income of £26 per annum, or satisfy the Ministry of Labour that they are paid £250 per annum in fees and emoluments, and at the same time are required, when unemployed, to attend daily at Employment Exchanges, and take any posts regarded as suitable which may be offered to them by unprofessional people, many girls will cease to enter the Nursing Profession, and, under such conditions, many parents will not allow their daughters to engage in occupations—nursing or otherwise—in which they could become skilled and self-supporting members of the community.

HOURS OF LABOUR BILL.

The Hours of Labour Bill, which has already

been before the House of Commons, and which, in an amended form, is again to be considered, provides for an eight hours' working day.

The Bill should be made to apply only to probationers in training, and nurses working under a middleman. Like the medical profession, nurses, when registered, should be free to sell their skill upon what terms they choose, otherwise there will be no freedom whatever, of service or action, for Registered Nurses, and there is very little doubt that the public will be unable to procure adequate attention in their own homes when sick.

RULES FRAMED BY THE GENERAL NURSING COUNCIL FOR ENGLAND AND WALES.

The Rules framed by the General Nursing Council for England and Wales are now being considered by the Ministry of Health. As the Scottish and Irish Councils have drafted Rules which do not commend themselves in several particulars to the Council in England, and political influence is being used in support of their policy, it is time that English nurses who may be affected by these undesirable proposals should be made acquainted with them, so that they may have an opportunity of considering them, and expressing their views concerning them to the Minister of Health, who has jurisdiction in connection with the English Registration Act, but not over the Scottish and the Irish Acts, and thus these proposals may not be sanctioned through lack of knowledge of the opinions and feelings of English nurses.

Members of the Royal British Nurses' Association have approached their Executive, and asked that the Association shall take the initiative in convening a gathering of nurses to confer upon all these matters which so vitally concern them and their work, and, if thought well, to embody their considered opinions in Resolutions to be placed before the responsible authorities. We are informed that such a meeting will be held on Friday, December 3rd, and we hope that nurses who have suggestions to offer on these burning questions will attend and protect their own interests.

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