

The Kent County Mental Hospital,  
Maidstone,  
9th August, 1921.

SIR,—As Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee of the Medico-Psychological Association, I took an active part in the promotion of the Bill for the Registration of Nurses, and being the Physician in charge of one of the largest public Mental Hospitals in the country, I am naturally interested in what is to be the future status of the Mental Nurse.

I understand that the question as to whether there should be two examinations or one is not yet finally settled for England, but I have seen the syllabus for the first examination to be passed at the end of eighteen months for Scottish Nurses, and in my opinion it would be advantageous to have a preliminary examination to cover the minimum knowledge that any nurse on the Register or Supplementary Registers of England should be required to possess.

In the interests of the Nursing profession as a whole, I would urge that the education and training for this preliminary examination could be taken at any Hospital recognised by the Nursing Council, whether General, Mental, Fever or Children's, and that the period of training so spent should be reciprocal between any of these Institutions.

The respective opportunities to be obtained can be illustrated by local conditions; the West Kent General Hospital at Maidstone having a nursing staff of 20, whereas this Institution in the same town has a nursing staff of 200. The engagement of a Sister-Tutor is, presumably, out of the question at the first-named Hospital, while my Committee has already decided to appoint one here as soon as circumstances permit.

To place all forms of training on an equality would do away with petty jealousies between one class of Nurse and another, and would tend to do what, after all, was the main object of the Nurses' Registration Act, viz., give every Nurse a national qualification and status.

I understand that Mental Nurses are not proportionately represented on your Council, and approach you in the hope that their interests will not be overlooked.

I am,

Your obedient Servant,  
(Signed) H. WOLSELEY LEWIS.

Joseph C. Priestley, Esq., K.C.,  
Chairman, General Nursing Council.

DR. BEDFORD PIERCE, then proposed that the Report of the Mental Nursing Committee be agreed, and it was put from the chair and carried that the Report be now approved.

The Press then retired, the rest of the business transacted being taken *in camera*.

#### Report of the Registration Committee.

The consideration of the Report of the Registration Committee was held *in camera*, but the following paragraph has been officially communicated.

Up to September 30th 1,816 applications for registration have been received, and £1,912 3s. 11d. has been received in fees.

Three hundred and sixty-six nurses were recommended to the Council for approval for registration on the General Part of the Register, their qualifications and references conforming in every particular to the Rules;

Fourteen for registration on the Supplementary Part for Fever Nurses; and

One for registration on the Supplementary Part for Mental Nurses.

These were approved, and the Council agreed to the following Resolution:—

That candidates who have complied with the requirements set forth in the Rules, whose applications for Registration are approved by the Council, shall have their names entered by the Registrar in the appropriate parts of the Register, and shall be granted a Certificate, and that authority is hereby given to affix the Seal of the Council thereto.

A list of those applicants whose qualifications do not conform to the Rules, was also appended to the Report.

The official notification of Registration will be sent to each applicant whose qualifications were approved.

Applicants whose qualifications did not conform to the Rules will receive a notification to this effect.

Now that the General Nursing Council has re-assembled after the vacation, the large number of applications received will be considered without further delay.

#### THE REASONS FOR THE RULES.

Rule 51, framed by the General Nursing Council, provides that the Council shall be at liberty to request any member or members of the Council to visit any place or places for the purpose of explaining the Nurses' Registration Act and its purposes and Rules, and to sanction the payment of all proper expenses incurred by such member or members in connection with such visit.

This, in our opinion, is a very wise provision, as one may read a code of Rules and still want to know the reason for them, and only those who have carefully studied the Act and helped to frame the Rules for carrying out its provisions can explain the details of this somewhat intricate subject to the satisfaction of those who rightly desire reliable information.

The East Lancashire Centre of the College of Nursing, Ltd., have invited Mrs. Bedford Fenwick to attend an Open Meeting of Nurses to be held in the Out-patient Department of the Royal Infirmary, Manchester, on the afternoon of Friday, October 21st, to explain the Rules framed by the General Nursing Council in connection with State Registration. Mrs. Fenwick has gladly accepted the invitation and together with Miss M. Breay will be the guest of Miss Sparshott, the Matron at the Royal Infirmary, Manchester.

It is so far back as September, 1878 (forty-three years ago), that Mrs. Fenwick entered as a Paying Probationer for a year's training at the old M.R.I.—grimy-faced, splendid old hospital—where she spent one of the happiest years of her life, acquiring knowledge in that wonderfully effective way by observing, listening, reading, and especially by questioning Head Nurses, ardent young medical

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