

Royal British Nurses' Association.

(Incorporated by  Royal Charter.)

THIS SUPPLEMENT BEING THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE CORPORATION.

THE TRAINED NURSE'S QUALIFICATIONS AND THE STATE REGISTER.

We have received many comments and enquiries in connection with reports which appeared in the Nursing Press of the discussion which arose at the last meeting of the General Nursing Council as to whether or not, when a nurse holds a certificate of general training, the fact that she has received this shall be entered on the Register. Most of the references to these reports have come from the younger members of the Association and those who are building up their careers on more or less independent lines as private nurses, health visitors, &c., and who naturally rely, to a very great extent, on the documentary evidences of proficiency which have been granted to them in connection with their general or special training.

There appears to have existed a widespread idea that not only each certificate of general training would be notified in the State Register, but that it would also indicate any special certificates which Registered Nurses may chance to possess. But, it would appear, the latter course is impracticable because, in the first place, the Act does not provide for it; many additional entries of special certificates would involve the Council in heavy expense and endless problems would arise as to which qualifications should be regarded as really worthy of notice and which should not. The fact, however, that there may be no notice in the published Register of the three or four years' certificate of general training has struck a note of sore discouragement in the minds of nurses, who regard their hospital certificates as their most precious possessions and who, on principle, place a high value on what is the hall-mark of their professional qualification to practise as nurses. Several nurses have asked us what is the probable proportion of those who possess no certificate, either owing to the fact that they trained before many schools commenced to grant certificates, or to some other cause. We are unable to give them accurate information on this point, but the proportion of nurses who hold no certificate of any sort is undoubtedly small, and so it seems to us that the policy which the representatives of the nurses should adopt is to try to arrive at the decision likely to prove of the greatest good to the greatest number. Moreover, unless the

Council is to make it its business to function into the future, rather than back into the past, the young nurses, in so far as the published Register is concerned, will be placed in a very inferior position to those trained a few years later. The younger nurses are, in a sense, the childhood of the profession, and it is up to the older members of it to protect their interests and to guard against risk of their hard-won qualifications being prejudiced by any action of the statutory body, whose primary purpose should be to foster and promote the professional status of the nurses in respect of every detail.

It has been argued that Florence Nightingale did not advocate the award of certificates of training, but is it right to put upon the person who gave the great impulse towards modern nursing the responsibility of its evolution as well? Nursing, just like other professions and employments, must strive to keep in harmony with the general progress of events, otherwise both the status and economic condition of its members will inevitably suffer. Goethe has defined evil as "delayed good," and has worked out the theory that it is simply disharmony, through hanging backwards in the ordinary march forward of evolution. It may truly prove to be so if, even from disinterested motives, what is regarded as a hospital's hall-mark that its training and teaching have been tested and found efficient, is eliminated in every entry in the State Register. Any sort of switch backwards to the days when certificates were rarely given and more rarely recognised, as evidence of efficiency, must inevitably result in disharmony, discord and probably bitter strife, for such conditions do always ensue as the result of any retrograde step.

GIFTS TO THE CLUB.

We acknowledge with thanks gifts from the following:—Misses Bennett, Bylett, Cope, Hall, Kent and Shepherd, flowers; Miss Dowell, venison; Miss Gillighan, fruit; Miss Liddiatt, a Lancashire cheese; Miss McDermot, honey.

A DELIGHTFUL CONCERT.

The large drawing-room at 194, Queen's Gate was full to overflowing when Mr. Paterson gave his concert on November 5th, and no more delightful evening has been spent at the new Club. It would be impossible to draw comparisons between the different items in the entertainment, even if

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