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EDITORIAL.

THE QUALIFICATIONS FOR THE STATE REGISTER.

The question as to whether or not the published particulars of the qualifications of nurses entered in the State Register shall include the notification of Certificates of Training, when possessed, is the burning question of the hour in the nursing world.

When the particulars to be entered in the Register were defined in the First Schedule of the Rules framed by the General Nursing Council for England and Wales, signed by the Minister, and published by the authority of the Council, no one anticipated that the footnote, inserted as explanatory to the word "Qualification," would lead to the question being raised of whether the possession of a Certificate could be entered in the Register or not.

We have no hesitation in saying that the intention of those who framed the Schedule was that the particulars entered under the heading "Qualification" should indicate the qualification upon which, in conformity with the Rules, nurses obtain admission to the Register.

Thus an "Existing" Nurse must produce a Certificate that she has had not less than three years' training before November 1st, 1919, or evidence that she has had not less than one year's general training and not less than two years' *bona fide* practice in attendance on the sick, before the same date.

An "Intermediate" Nurse must produce a Certificate of not less than three years' training before July, 1924.

It is quite proper that the Register should indicate which nurses were "Existing" on November 1st, 1919, which are "Intermediate," and which (after July, 1924) are "Nurses by Examination," but this is surely a matter of classification, for the convenient and orderly arrangement of the Register, and

has nothing to do with the Certificates of Proficiency, awarded to nurses after a definite term of Training and Examination, on which they obtain admission to the State Register.

The contrary view—that the Schedule, as worded, does not permit of the inclusion of the word "certificate" (or "cert.") on the Register, thus reducing the qualification recorded merely to a residential, not an educational or professional, one—has now, however, been put forward.

At the meeting of the General Nursing Council held on November 18th the Minister of Health indicated how the matter may be put on to a footing free from ambiguity.

On behalf of the Minister, Mr. L. G. Brock wrote to the Registrar:—

"If the Council should decide to add to, or otherwise vary, the particulars set out in the First Schedule, it would be necessary for them to submit an Amended Schedule accordingly, and it will not be competent to them to enter in the Register any particulars other than those indicated in the Schedule until the Amendment has received the Minister's sanction."

It is obvious that to put the all-important question of the record of Certificates beyond doubt, an Amended Schedule incorporating the provision that this shall be done should at once be framed, and submitted to the Minister. We hope this course will be taken.

The Register is being compiled at great cost, in justice to highly qualified nurses, and to give information concerning the professional education, skill, and competence of nurses to the Medical Profession and the public. A list of names, with which are recorded merely the hospitals and dates at which nurses were in residence, is absolutely useless for the purpose for which Parliament has passed the Nurses' Registration Act, and would establish a precedent for ineptitude and futility which it would be impossible to exceed.

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