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EDITORIAL.

THE OPENING OF THE STATE REGISTER OF NURSES.

It is rarely indeed that any paper has the opportunity of making so momentous an announcement as that which it is our privilege to make in this issue, namely, that the State Register of Nurses in England and Wales is now opened, and the Profession of Nursing is founded firmly on a legal basis, under Statutory Authority. Only those who, for over thirty years, have worked unceasingly to attain this end can appreciate to the full what is implied in this announcement, or share wholly in the joy of its achievement. Henceforth, the trained nurses in this country who fulfil the requirements of its General Nursing Council, will be able to use exclusively the title of "Registered Nurse," and thus will be on an entirely different footing from amateur and partially trained women.

But Registration implies much more. At the back of the Register is the organisation of Nursing Education, with the enforcement of a common standard of training and knowledge, and after the first State Examination is held, there will be one portal only through which admission is obtained to the Nursing Profession, namely, the State Examination.

Again, the only way in which trained nurses can participate in the government of their Profession is as Registered Nurses. Here is seen the wisdom of those who contended so earnestly for a preponderating voice for the Registered Nurses on their Governing Body, and who would accept nothing less.

On the General Nursing Council for England and Wales, out of twenty-five members, sixteen are trained nurses. In the first instance they were appointed by the Minister of Health, but in the near future, when a sufficient number of nurses are registered, the present Council

will give place to one on which the sixteen nurse members are the elected representatives of the Registered Nurses.

This is at once a privilege and a responsibility, and it will behove every Registered Nurse to see that she discharges that responsibility wisely and well, for the efficiency of the Council, and, therefore, the well-being of the profession at large, depends upon the representatives thus elected. The present Council have accumulated a great deal of experience, and have worked hard in the interests of the nurses, as will be seen by studying the Rules for Existing and Intermediate Nurses, signed by the Minister of Health on July 14th (an auspicious augury to students of French History). Registered Nurses will do well to follow closely the full Reports of the meetings of the General Nursing Council issued in this JOURNAL. They will thus be able to estimate how they are served by the members of the Council, and to vote for their representatives accordingly. Once they have returned them they should give them their full confidence and support.

In the meantime every nurse should obtain from the Registrar, General Nursing Council, 12, York Gate, Regent's Park, N.W., an Application Form for Registration, should fill it in, and, supported by the necessary documents and Registration Fee, should forward it to the Registrar with the least possible delay.

At the present time, those entitled to registration need pass no examination, but if they permit the period of grace to expire, they will have to conform to the Rules and pass the State Examination.

We heartily congratulate those who have worked long and faithfully for the organisation of Nursing Education, and the welfare of the sick, through the establishment of a State Register, on the joy of achievement.

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