

NURSING ECHOES.

We have received a large number of letters from members of the Nursing Profession and others, expressing their pleasure that the "Certificate Question" has been settled in their favour by the General Nursing Council, and hoping the Minister of Health will approve its decision that their hardly earned certificates shall be recorded on the State Register. We do not think any good purpose would be served at the present time in publishing such letters at length, but the whole documentary evidence on this matter has been filed for future reference if necessary.

The important thing now is to register, and not to leave it until it is too late to appear in the first issue of the Register. Crowding in at the last moment means congestion in the routine work of the office. Remember, the first Register is to be published as soon after July 1st, 1922, as possible.

The "Marys" of Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service have sent £5, and those of the Territorial Army Nursing Service three guineas, to the Marys' Wedding Gift to Princess Mary. Every day Her Royal Highness receives deputations bringing gifts, for which she thanks them in pretty little speeches.

The Banquet organised by the friends of Miss Anna C. Maxwell, R.N., which took place in New York at the beginning of this month, went off with great splendour. About 800 persons were present, personal friends and co-workers, men and women. A distinguished colleague writes "it was a beautiful way of closing her long and useful professional life. The message sent by Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, President of the National Council of Nurses of Great Britain and Ireland, on its behalf, was effectively read by the chairman, Dr. John Hinley, former President of the University of New York." We hope in a future issue to give a fuller account of this inspiring tribute to the devoted work of one of that company which blazed the nursing trail in America.

Members of the Matrons' Council are looking forward to their meeting at the London Temperance Hospital, Hampstead Road, N.W., on Saturday, February 25th. The meeting is at 3 p.m., after which the Matron, Miss Kathleen Smith, R.R.C., will entertain guests to tea.

We learn the Wigmore Hotel is to be turned into a big Nursing Home, or, in other words, a large private hospital, with several medical men on the board. It will contain fifty bedrooms, each having its own bathroom, and two operating theatres on the roof.

We know something, from seven years' practical experience, of the management of a Nursing Home. To be the Director of such a concern is a liberal education in the idiosyncracies of human nature! At present the majority of these Homes are the private concerns of trained nurses, and whether they are well managed or otherwise depends to a large extent on such proprietors. With an experienced, practical, and conscientious woman at the head, with capital in hand, many of these institutions are run well; but there is no law to compel such conditions, and in Homes run for profit by untrained men and women, very discreditable conditions are known to exist.

The chief difficulty in connection with Nursing Homes is that they have not been built for the purpose, and are usually inconvenient and too small in which to make a profit without exploitation of the limited number of patients who can be admitted. Then, few trained nurses have sufficient reserve capital, and there is a temptation to economise in undesirable directions. The cost now of a resident nursing staff, of reliable domestic labour and a high standard of cleanliness, a good quality of food, of warmth and heat, and other items, is almost prohibitive, unless provided for a large number of persons; and the complaint of patients and often of doctors that the charge of four or five guineas a week should suffice means not only no great profit, but working at a loss. Doctors are seldom men of business, and the management of large private hospitals will not succeed without sound finance and a thorough knowledge of domestic economy. What we need in London are first-class Hotel Hospitals where science regulates the commissariat department, as it does that of the medical and surgical technique.

We remember many such little conversations as the following with private patients on our daily rounds:—

Matron: "Feeling more cheerful this morning? What sort of a night?"

Patient: "Not so bad; but am very tired of slops."

Matron: "Now just guess. I have a bit of good news for you."

Patient (eagerly): "Solids?"

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