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EDITORIAL.

THE PURITY OF THE STATE REGISTER AND ITS ECONOMIC VALUE.

When the Nurses' Registration Act was passed in December, 1919, the General Nursing Council for England and Wales then set up, after due consideration, adopted as the minimum standard of "adequate knowledge and experience" which the Act enjoined them to define, "evidence that the applicant has had not less than one year's training in a Hospital or Infirmary approved by the Council, together with evidence that she has subsequently been *bonâ fide* engaged in practice as a nurse in attendance on the sick for not less than two years before 1st November, 1919."

This Rule was agreed by the Councils of Scotland and Ireland, approved by the Minister of Health, and laid before each House of Parliament for twenty-one days.

Thus, while justice was done to Existing Nurses, the public were protected from the peril of the names of dangerously incompetent persons being placed upon the State Register.

It should be remembered, further, that the Act prevents no one from acting as a nurse, but only imposes penalties for the unauthorised use of the name or title of Registered Nurse.

Every trained nurse knows that the minimum of one year's general training is little enough, yet Miss M. M. C. Herbert, who says she has made the subject specially her own, is anxious to get people on to the General Part of the Register who have had no general training.

At a recent meeting of the London Centre of the College of Nursing, Ltd., Miss Herbert pleaded that there were nurses working in special hospitals, who might have devoted their lives to tuberculosis or cancer, for whom no supplementary register was provided. She instanced other cases, and said that the General Nursing Council should use their power to amend the Rules so as to get as large a number as possible on the Register.

Miss Rundle, Secretary of the College of Nursing, Ltd., is reported to have demurred

to the suggestion that action should be taken by the General Nursing Council, on the ostensible ground that it was not so easy for the Council as for the College to decide on special cases. The College was not, she said, tied with all kinds of red tape, so that it could get on with the work more quickly. The necessity for consulting Scotland and Ireland and the Minister of Health caused delay. She had reason to believe it was now being discussed at the General Nursing Council, but if it were passed to-day, or next week, or the week after, it still had to go to the Minister of Health, and with a General Election there was no one at present to appeal to. They must push it through as quickly as possible.

Miss Rundle does not appear to understand the difference between the Register of a Limited Company, of which she is Secretary, and that of a Statutory Council, set up by Parliament, granting legal status to the Nursing Profession. She may airily dispose of the safeguards imposed by Parliament, in the Nurses' Registration Act, as "all kinds of red tape" to a meeting of College members, but we think Parliament will be less easy to persuade.

The suggestion is in fact a proposal to evade the provisions of the Nurses' Registration Act, and to get nurses, otherwise ineligible, on to the Register by the back door of the College of Nursing, Ltd., through a provision "That all College of Nursing members should be accepted by the G.N.C. for admission to the State Register."

The full significance of Miss Rundle's speech will be understood when we remember that the College Council gave a pledge to nurses to induce them to join it, that if they paid a guinea and were on the College Register they would "automatically and without further fee be placed upon the State Register when the Nurses' Registration Act was passed."

Parliament, however, did not redeem this pledge, and the officials of this Company have never ceased to interfere with the Statutory Council's duties, and to attempt to drag down

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