

the untrained nurse—and will, no doubt, be widely adopted by the latter—many trained nurses will avoid it. This is most deplorable as for years the registrationists have looked forward to a “protected” uniform—a privilege secured to V.A.D.s, who may now assume our “cloth” if registered, without let or hindrance, although we may be sentenced to imprisonment if we infringe *their* rights.

(To be concluded.)

## QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

AUGUST 1ST.

### MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE.

MR. TURNER asked the Minister of Health if his Department are taking any special steps to develop maternity and child-welfare clinics so as to cope with and help to reduce the death roll of ten per day occurring amongst women during pregnancy and child-birth?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: I am well aware of the continued high rate of maternal mortality associated with child-birth, and under the Maternity and Child Welfare Act I am endeavouring to encourage the establishment and development of maternity and midwifery services (including antenatal centres, maternity hospitals and the provision of midwives). I hope that, by such means, the present death rate will be progressively and substantially reduced.

### NURSES (REGISTRATION).

MR. R. RICHARDSON asked the Minister of Health why the General Nursing Council for England and Wales are still sending out application forms, Form 1 (a), to existing nurses, even although the last date, July 14th, 1923, specified by the Nurses' Registration Act, 1919, for returning these forms has expired?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: I am informed that the General Nursing Council have not issued application forms, Form 1 (a), to existing nurses since July 14th, except in response to applications which were duly received on or before July 14th, but could not be disposed of by that day owing to the great pressure of work.

DR. CHAPPLE: Is it the case that applications are still coming in from nurses who were entitled to be put on the register before the 14th, but whose applications are late? Has the Right Hon. gentleman any information as to that?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: I cannot say.

### REMARKS.

The Nurses' Registration Act provides, in Section 3 (2) (c), that Existing Nurses must make an application for registration “within a period of two years after the date on which the rules to be made under the provision of this paragraph first came into operation.” These rules first came into operation on July 14th, 1921, and thus the two years' term of grace terminated on July 14th, 1923.

Moreover, the Statutory Rules include under the Second Schedule an Application Form 1 (a) for admission to the Register, which is the legal document upon which applications have to be made—so that it is entirely out of order that these forms should be issued by the Registrar after July 14th, 1923, as apparently condoned by the Minister of Health. Mr. Chamberlain may not be aware that undated Application Forms have been issued by the Registrar in bulk, so that apparently nothing can be easier than to evade the Act and the Rules. We learn that forms have been sent abroad, which could not possibly be returned in time to comply with the law.

AUGUST 2ND.

### NURSES' REGISTRATION.

DR. CHAPPLE asked the Minister of Health whether he is aware that, in regard to existing nurses under Section 3 (2) (c) of the Nurses' Registration Act, 1919, a new rule first came into operation on July 7th, 1923; that the words enabling persons who, within a period of two years after the date on which the rule to be made first comes into operation, grant to an existing nurse the right to apply for registration up to July 7th, 1925; and whether, seeing these points are in dispute, and in view of the continuing hardship to *bona fide* nurses that is arising from a misinterpretation of the Statute, he will consult the Law Officers of the Crown upon the subject?

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH (LORD EUSTACE PERCY): The answer to the first part of the question is in the affirmative. As regards the second and third parts, my Right Hon. Friend is unable to accept a construction based on a mis-quotation of the Statute, and sees no necessity to consult the Law Officers on the matter.

DR. CHAPPLE: Might I ask the Noble Lord whether the General Nursing Council read the words “a rule” instead of “the rules,” which they are required by law to do, and, if so, will he consult the Law Officers of the Crown as to whether the words “when a first rule comes into operation” are different from the words “when a rule first comes into operation,” and will he consult the Law Officers upon the point in view of the fact that a large number of nurses are suffering a grievous injury and many more may suffer from the misconception of this Clause?

LORD E. PERCY: So far as I can understand the Hon. gentleman, he is merely repeating his original misquotation.

DR. CHAPPLE: Will the noble Lord say what is the misquotation?

LORD E. PERCY: Yes; I will. The Hon. Member has converted the plural in the Statute into the singular.

MR. SPEAKER: I think this matter had better be pursued in private.

DR. CHAPPLE: On a point of order, might I ask the noble Lord this, whether, according to the law since 1850, the plural does not include the singular and *vice versa*.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)