

more likely than not that they stand in fear of mental developments, and will not be able to cope with an emergency when it arises."

The Committee, dealing with "Defects in the present System," express the view that "the pre-eminence naturally given to the 'General' hospital, reflected in the 'General' part of the Register, has ceased to be justified," and they consider that "the training obtainable at present under the regulations of the General Nursing Council does not produce finished nurses with the experience of the kind necessary to fill the posts in and out of hospital open to trained nurses."

Education, Training and Finance.

The Educational Standard of Candidates and the question of the Preliminary State Examination are, at the present time, very live ones not only in Scotland but in England and Wales.

The Committee suggest that, having regard to the proposed Test of general knowledge likely to be enforced in England and Wales in the interests of reciprocity, a standard at least not lower may "require" to be introduced in Scotland, and suggests that the standard set by the Scottish Education Department for domestic science and physical training teachers might be appropriate. They support the splitting up of the usual preliminary examination.

As regards finance, the Committee point out that "up to the present the cost of training nurses has been borne by the hospitals alone, and it is obvious to us that one of the chief obstacles in the minds of hospital authorities to changes in the existing system is that such changes would almost inevitably lead to an increase in their costs . . . it may be said with truth that the trained nurse serves the whole community, both in and out of hospital, and consequently it seems only equitable that the community as represented by the State should make a contribution towards the training of which it reaps the benefit."

The Committee say that the number of candidates entering the Nursing Profession each year is roughly comparable with the number of women entering the teaching profession each year, and point out that "the educational system of the country offers very definite facilities for the training of teachers by the provision of training colleges, and by the giving of bursaries, grants and maintenance allowances to trainees, so that they may attend these colleges or the universities. . . . We understand also, that it is not unknown for education committees, with the sanction of the Scottish Education Department, to give financial assistance towards training for occupations such as massage, chiropody, etc. The reason why nursing has not shared in these benefits is not clear."

The Committee's Proposals.

The chief proposals of the Committee are that a widened general training which could be compressed into a period of five years should be established, and strongly recommend that grants from State Funds should be made available to those training institutions which decide to participate in the proposed new scheme for fully trained nurses. They say: "As we envisage a grant towards the training of the nurses who would take this course, it would be necessary for accounting purposes for these nurses to enrol at the beginning of their hospital training. In the first place, committees of matrons might be formed in the various regions. Matrons of all hospitals which decided to adopt the scheme would be eligible to attend the meetings. Nurses would, as at present, make applications to the matron of the hospital in which they wished to train, and she, if satisfied with the qualifications of the candidates, would put the applications before the matrons' committee, and it would be for that committee, with its knowledge of the teaching material available and the vacancies for trainees,

to regulate the placing of candidates in the various hospitals. For grant accounting purposes, lists of candidates accepted for the course could be forwarded by each matrons' committee to the General Nursing Council, who would maintain a central roll for all these nurses in training."

Central Register.

The Committee propose that a Central Register shall be set up for "the fully trained nurse." They say that "the various parts of the Register which exist at present record the names of nurses who have taken the respective sectionalised courses; even the nurse on the present General Part of the Register has in effect received only a sectionalised training. The wider training recommended for the fully trained nurse of the future will remove her from the category of the nurse whose training is only sectional, and for this reason the creation of a special part of the Register to contain the names of such fully trained nurses will be necessary. In our view, this part of the Register will take precedence of all the existing parts. It will gain in importance as time goes on, and may be regarded as the nucleus of the one-part register of nurses which we consider will ultimately take the place of the present sectionalised Register. In view of its importance, we recommend that this special part should be called the 'Central Register.' The appearance of a nurse's name thereon would denote that she has been trained in a medical and surgical hospital and in a fever hospital, and the entry would be amplified by specifying the optional courses of training she had taken" (*i.e.*, two courses of six months each out of a selection offered, such as sick children, tuberculosis, mental, orthopaedic, or chronic sick).

They propose the establishment of a supplementary part of the Register for Tuberculosis Nurses, though they say they do so "with some reluctance, as they feel that the aim should be to reduce the number of parts of the Register rather than increase them."

In regard to Mental training, the Committee draw attention to "the dual system of examination sponsored by the General Nursing Council and the Royal Medico-Psychological Association respectively." They express the opinion that it is "most unfortunate that these two systems should exist side by side."

They point out that "many mental nurses are obliged to take the Royal Medico-Psychological Association's certificate under the terms of their contract of training. If any of them wish to take the General Nursing Council's certificate in addition they must sit the separate General Nursing Council examinations and pay the full fees attaching to these examinations—both preliminary and final. It must also be remembered that the holding of the Royal Medico-Psychological Association certificate does not carry with it, as the General Nursing Council certificate does, the privilege of shortened courses if nurses proceed to other hospitals to qualify for admission to other parts of the Register. Superintendents of mental hospitals have unanimously admitted the great value of general training to mental nurses, but their insistence on the Royal Medico-Psychological Association certificate to the exclusion of the General Nursing Council certificate subjects their nurses to greater trouble and expense in gaining their general training."

Annual Retention Fee.

The Committee propose the abolition of the Annual Retention Fee of 2s. 6d., and that it should be commuted into a lump sum payable at the time of registration.

Publication of Register.

They further propose that, "instead of the Register being revised in its entirety annually, it should be revised, say, once in five years, and only a Supplementary

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)