

List of new additional to the Register published in the intervening years."

Constitution of the Council.

In regard to the constitution of the General Nursing Council for Scotland, the Committee say, "It has been represented to us that the constitution makes no provision for medical men serving on the Council. In the past the Council has always had one or more doctors among its appointed members, but this is merely fortuitous. . . . In view of the close alliance in which doctors and nurses work, we think that the matter should not be left to chance and that definite provision should be made for the representation of doctors on the General Nursing Council."

They suggest two should be appointed by the Department of Health for Scotland on the nomination of medical bodies.

COMMENTS ON THE REPORT.

The Report of the Scottish Departmental Committee on the Training of Nurses bears evidence of much careful study and the collection and presentment of useful data of considerable value. It is when we come to the Committee's proposals for dealing with the material before it that we find ground for criticism, for if some of its proposals were carried into effect the Nurses' Registration Act in Scotland would become a dead letter.

In regard to the recommendation to establish a Central Register on which should be entered the names of "fully trained nurses," trained in a medical and surgical hospital plus training in a fever hospital, followed by "two courses of six months each, out of a selection offered, such as sick children, tuberculosis, mental, orthopaedics, and chronic sick," we are not averse to a comprehensive five years' course, as suggested, but we are strongly of opinion that some experience in the nursing of sick children should be included as an obligatory subject in the three years' course of training in a general hospital. We are averse to this recommendation in regard to the proposal to include six months' training in mental nursing as one of the selective six months' courses, as nothing less than two years' training in this highly specialised branch of psychological nursing would suffice.

We also strenuously object to the recommendation that instead of the Register being revised in its entirety annually it should be revised once in five years, and only a supplementary list of new additions to the Register published in the intervening years. This would render the Register useless for reference purposes, and would constitute a breach of faith with the nurses who have submitted themselves to examination, and paid examination and registration fees to have their names printed in the State Register of Nurses. Already the General Nursing Council for Scotland publish only a typewritten Register, and such a Register as that proposed would be quite useless for reference purposes. Moreover, the proposal that "in future the Annual Retention Fee should be commuted into a lump sum, payable at the time of Registration", would, if adopted, complete the disaster. The payment of a small Annual Fee (2s. 6d.) was designedly incorporated in the Nurses' Registration Acts in order to keep the Registers up to date, the promoters of the Bills having before them the difficulty experienced by the Central Midwives Board in keeping the Roll of Midwives correct, and midwives are a much more stationary body than nurses.

In regard to the proposal to establish a "Supplementary Part of the Register for Tuberculosis Nurses" we are strongly averse to increasing the number of Supplementary Parts for Specialists. The object of the Council should be to make their five years' Scheme of Training now proposed so comprehensive that it would include experience of Tuberculosis Nursing.

In regard to the Constitution of the General Nursing

Council for Scotland, which at present consists of 15 members, nine elected by the registered nurses and six appointed, the Committee recommend that "in view of the close alliance between doctors' and nurses' work" two medical representatives should be appointed by medical bodies. This would leave the registered nurses a bare majority on the Council; a serious danger, as it is already over-weighted with lay and medical control.

In regard to the paragraph in the Report dealing with the relations of the General Nursing Council for Scotland and the Royal Medico-Psychological Association, we agree that it is "most unfortunate that these two systems should exist side by side," but not because we consider them on an equal footing. The General Nursing Council is the authority appointed by Parliament to deal with Nursing (including Mental Nursing) Education, the Royal Medico-Psychological Association is a voluntary Association which is kicking against the pricks.

The position is one which demands the attention of Parliament, which placed under the authority of the General Nursing Councils the control of nurses' education and registration, and it is an outrageous abuse of power in our State-supported mental hospitals that "many mental nurses are obliged to take the Royal Medico-Psychological Association's certificate *under the terms of their contract of training.*" What right have the authorities of these hospitals to enforce a contract so inimical to the interests of candidates for training who look to them for guidance, as shown in the Report of the Scottish Departmental Committee? In common with the Local Government Board for Scotland and the London Obstetrical Society, the Medico-Psychological Association did useful work in the past in conducting voluntary examinations, the one for nurses, the other for midwives. The two former bodies ceased holding their examinations when examinations were established under the authority of the State-appointed bodies, the General Nursing Councils and the Central Midwives Board. The R.M.P.A. would not have been in its present invidious position of flouting an Act of Parliament and continuing to conduct for gain its own examination had it adopted the same course.

The Report which is signed by all the members of the Committee contains a strongly worded reservation on the part of Miss E. D. Smail, A.R.R.C., Lady Superintendent of Nurses at the Royal Infirmary, Edinburgh, to the Recommendation in regard to the Central State Register which it is proposed to institute. Miss Smail states: "It is my considered opinion that the suggested scheme does not justify at present even an experimental change in 'the existing system of training and registration of nurses in Scotland, and that if the scheme is adopted the general standard of efficiency in the essentials of nursing will inevitably be lowered. . . ."

"As a member of the nursing profession I cannot subscribe to the scheme outlined in Recommendation (4) or to the system advocated for the working of the scheme, which is neither acceptable nor practicable."

An interesting extract from the evidence given by Mr. J. Mackay Thomson, representing the Scottish Education Department, on the question of financial assistance for girls in training for the nursing profession is included as an Appendix. He discussed the subject under "Assistance from Local Authorities," and "Assistance from Endowment Funds, under the Educational Endowments (Scotland) Act 1928," and expressed surprise that such applications are so rarely made.

And lastly we desire to point out to Scottish Nurses that if some of the Recommendations in the Report as it stands at present are carried out, this will inevitably mean a rupture of the reciprocal relations between the English and Scottish General Nursing Councils which must be prejudicial to the interests of Scottish Nurses.

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