

## A QUESTION OF NATIONAL IMPORTANCE.

We quote the following report from the *Public Assistance Journal and Health and Hospital Review*, which deals very fairly with Poor Law and Local Government Administration.

### TRAINING OF ASSISTANT NURSES.

SIMPLIFICATION OF PROPOSED SYLLABUS ASKED FOR BY ROYAL COLLEGE OF NURSING.

The Council of the Royal College of Nursing are to ask the Minister of Health to simplify the proposed syllabus for the training of Assistant Nurses.

"At their latest meeting the Council discussed the question of Assistant Nurses' training. It was pointed out that the urgent need to regularise the position of the Assistant Nurse, and the pressure brought upon the Ministry of Health from hospitals desirous of being approved as centres of instruction, had allowed little time for the General Nursing Council to consult outside bodies on this important matter, and the draft syllabus had already been sent to the House of Commons.

Opposition to the syllabus in its present form came chiefly from the Sister-Tutor Section of the Royal College, members having sent in their views from all over the country. The Section contended that the syllabus needed to be modified; that many of the practical procedures, such as tepid sponging and the giving of hypodermic injections, should never be regarded as within the province of the "nursing assistant," whose work, they said, should be limited to the carrying out of simple nursing care under trained supervision. The tutors also urged that simple practical tests carried out by assessors should take the place of the proposed examinations. Other Council members supported the Section, saying that the proposed syllabus was beyond the powers of the average Assistant Nurse of to-day, who was essentially a practical worker and slow to master theoretical subjects. Thus a third grade of nurse would be created, and the situations would be more chaotic than ever.

### IN SUPPORT OF THE SYLLABUS.

Those who favoured the proposed syllabus said that the whole aim was to prepare the Assistant Nurse for the work she was now doing, and it was better to ensure that she was being correctly taught from the outset. However, those who taught her had an obligation to make their instruction as elementary and practical as possible; the examinations would be simple, but they would ensure that the Assistant Nurse was capable of writing an intelligible report.

Other members felt that it was better to include too little in the syllabus rather than too much; then those Assistant Nurses who showed themselves capable of more advanced work could be given extra instruction. With Assistant Nurses trained to the standard proposed, general practitioners and the public would cease to demand the services of State-Registered Nurses. There was always a tendency to intensify the preparation for any examination as time went on, so that what was originally a simple test became more formidable year by year.

After prolonged discussion the Council agreed to ask the Minister to receive a deputation to press for the simplification of the Assistant Nurses' proposed syllabus, at all events until such time as her regulated instruction had passed the experimental stage.

### EXIT OF THE REGISTERED NURSE.

The most significant statement advanced at this meeting was: "*That with Assistant Nurses trained to the standard proposed, general practitioners and the public would cease to demand the services of Registered Nurses.*"

Surely, had this question been handled intelligently—the Council of the Royal College of Nursing should have realised that de-grading nursing standards as proposed by

the Horder Committee must inevitably eliminate the Registered Nurse and ruin the efficient Nurse Training Schools.

Before further damage is done we call upon the Minister of Health to summon a conference with reputable organisations of Registered Nurses. So far they have been ignored by the Government.

## THE BRITISH COLLEGE OF NURSES, LTD.

Owing to the danger to life from the constant passing of Flying Bombs—and destruction in Queen's Gate—the Council meeting to have been held on July 26th, was postponed, and it will be wise of Fellows and Members to defer visits to No. 19, Queen's Gate for the present. The daily routine is being carried out as far as possible in spite of constant reminders that London is in the front rank of battle, with little defence.

### "A SOLDIER, HIS PRAYER."

We have received several enquiries concerning the poem "A Soldier, His Prayer," from which we quoted in our Editorial last month, which is not surprising—many Nurses wish to know where they can obtain a copy.

We have made enquiries and find the first issue was exhausted immediately and is out of print.

"Poems from the Desert," the title of the book is reprinting and can be ordered from the printer—George G. Harrap, 182, High Holborn, London, W.C.1. Price 6s.

This work will be included in the Library of the British College of Nurses Ltd., 19, Queen's Gate, London, S.W. 7, when issued, and on loan to members.

## THE REGISTER OF NURSES MAINTAINED BY THE GENERAL NURSING COUNCIL FOR SCOTLAND, 1944.

We have to thank the General Nursing Council for Scotland for a copy of the Register of Nurses, 1944, maintained by it in pursuance of the Nurses' Registration (Scotland) Act, 1919, and are glad to note that it evidently contains a considerable increase in the number of thoroughly qualified nurses registered. That this increase should be maintained from year to year is imperative now that the General Nursing Council for Scotland is compiling a Roll of Assistant Nurses, whose curriculum will not attempt to attain the standard of efficiency hitherto attained and recorded in the State Register—a distinction which the general public is quite unable to estimate. Let us hope that, with their usual commonsense, the Scottish people will, as soon as the law can be enforced, sweep away this dangerous and unjustifiable dual State recognition of unqualified nurses.

But to return to the Register of Nurses.

It goes without saying that it is issued in first-class form. Paper and printing of first-class quality, handsomely bound in royal blue, a volume to be proud of, and we feel sure the nurses whose names are entered in it realise with pride the privilege of having their names recorded therein. It is evidence of long and serious study and practical training which they have conscientiously undertaken to qualify themselves as safe and efficient nurses of the sick; many of whom will no doubt continue further studies to qualify in the numerous branches of special nursing and other contingent branches of knowledge, which will enhance their value in administrative positions of authority.

We have placed the new Register of Nurses maintained by the General Nursing Council for Scotland on the stand reserved for this invaluable publication, and look forward to its further study from time to time, as in it are recorded the names of many friends.

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