

NURSES' REGULATIONS.

On Thursday, October 18th last—(to quote Parliamentary Debates)—Mr. Linstead: "I beg to move that the Nurses' Regulations, 1945, S.R. and O., 1945, No. 638, dated May 31st, 1945, made by the Minister of Health under Proviso (h) of Sub-section 1 of Section 6, of the Nurses' Act, 1943—a copy of which Regulations was presented on June 6th, in the last Session of the last Parliament, be annulled."

Mr. Linstead then made a well-reasoned demand for the exclusion of so-called Christian Science Nurses from legal status under the Nurses' Act, 1943. The point of the motion, he argued, is to compare that situation with the requirements for the State Registered Nurse of this country. In their case there is a high preliminary educational qualification—certificates of examination, a set course of training, and a State Register, with disciplinary control by the General Nursing Council. The whole period is a minimum of four years between entrance and registration. I think the House will agree that far less than justice is being done to the State Registered Nurse by allowing this group of practitioners to use their name and title of "Nurse." I suggest that it is partly unfair, partly dangerous to the public, and peculiarly unfair to the people whom we are trying to attract into the Nursing profession, if they feel that they have to toil through a heavy course of training and pass several examinations while there is something which they are bound to regard as a backdoor to this title which they have to work so very hard for.

The present position, I may mention, is the result of an undertaking given by Mr. Ernest Brown, M.P., when he was Minister of Health.

I hope that the present Minister of Health will not feel that the new circumstances which exist now is bound by any such concession.

An animated debate followed, mostly in support of Mr. Linstead's Motion—Christian Science members opposing it—and claiming privileges for women acting as Christian Science "Nurses." The Minister of Health (Mr. Aneurin Bevan, M.P.) claimed that "we are not arbitrating on the merits of the claims of Christian Science. . . . These religious denominational matters can raise very great heat and not very much light. . . . We are discussing whether in fact it is a good thing in the interests of the nursing profession that people who have not the qualifications the nurses possess should be described 'nurses' and, where confusion will arise in the public mind as to who is a nurse and who is not. . . . Nurses have represented to me in no uncertain terms that they regard this exemption as one which derogates from the status of their profession."

Mr. Aneurin Bevan then asked the Movers of the Motion to withdraw it, and said "I suggest that we should meet each other for the purpose of considering whether a form of words cannot be found which will be agreeable to all parties. . . . I hope, therefore, the House will allow the Motion to be withdrawn."

After further questions, Motion by leave was withdrawn.

The verbatim report of this debate is vastly instructive. We advise Registered Nurses interested in Nursing Politics to read it carefully in "Hansard"; they will then realise how necessary it is for them, if they intend to retain any professional status at all, to secure professional representation in the House of Commons, so that their interests can be represented by experts.

We desire to offer sincere thanks to Mr. Linstead, M.P., and to Lieut.-Commander Clark Hutchison, M.P., for their eloquent support of our professional standards, without the maintenance of which the health of the people is seriously endangered.

COMPULSORY SERVICE FOR THE STATE BY REGISTERED NURSES.

A SYSTEM OF SERVITUDE.

Special Fields of Nursing for State Registered Nurses Qualifying as a Result of the October Examination in England and Wales and in Scotland.

1.—The Minister of Labour and National Service, in consultation with the Minister of Health and the Secretary of State for Scotland, has had under consideration recommendations made by the National Advisory Council on Nurses and Midwives as to the continuance of the requirement that newly qualified State Registered Nurses should serve for a year after qualification in certain special fields of nursing. In accordance with the recommendations of the Council it has been decided that the special fields of service for State Registered Nurses qualifying after the October, 1945, examinations in England and Wales and in Scotland should be as follows:—

(a) Tuberculosis nursing, mental nursing and nursing of the chronic sick.

(b) Training as a midwife which at present carries an obligation to practise midwifery for a year after passing Part II. of the C.M.B. examination.

(c) Training with District Nursing Associations which at present carries an obligation to practise district nursing for one year after qualifying.

(d) Employment in certain E.M.S. hospitals specially designated by the Ministry of Health or the Department of Health for Scotland.

(e) Nursing in a cancer hospital.

(f) Nursing or training in a hospital specially devoted to treating ophthalmic patients or patients with diseases of the ear, nose and throat, for nurses with one year or more of experience of this work before or during training for State Registration, or devoted to sick children's nursing for nurses who are already State Registered sick children's nurses.

(g) Nursing in a hospital for infectious diseases.

(h) Nursing in an affiliated hospital, that is to say, a hospital affiliated to a complete training school.

[NOTE.—In the case of (e), (f), (g) and (h), placing is conditional on the existing trained staff of the hospital being below an agreed minimum staffing standard.]

(i) Training for Part I of the C.M.B. examination, which may be preceded or followed by six months' service in any other special field. In the case of a nurse over the age of 27, the training after Part I. of the C.M.B. examination can include training for the Health Visitors Certificate, which at present carries an obligation to practise as a Health Visitor for a year after qualifying.

2.—Of the special fields referred to above, (g) and (h) are additional to those announced for State Registered Nurses qualifying as a result of the April examination in England and Wales and the May examination in Scotland.

3.—The procedure continues whereby a minimum staffing standard for trained staff for each training hospital is assessed after consultation with the hospital authorities and trained nurses required to bring the staffing of hospitals up to the agreed minimum staffing standard for that hospital will, in the first place, be granted deferment from service in the special fields for a period of six months. If other trained nurses do not become available to the hospital from subsequent examinations, then sufficient nurses will be granted an extra six months' deferment to bring the trained staff in post so far as possible up to the agreed minimum staffing standard. (In the case of Scotland, owing to the incidence of the examinations, deferments are for a longer period.)

4.—Periods of deferment in their training hospital under 3 above will exempt the newly qualified nurses from further

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)