

subordinates under the professional control which a system of registration affords; and a considerable section of the public are still unaware of the grave abuses which exist, of the innumerable parasites which cling around the nursing profession, and are a disgrace to the calling and a continual danger to the sick. The suggestion which is strongly advocated is that an Act of Parliament should be passed forming a Nursing Council composed of medical men and trained nurses, to which should be confided supervision over the education of nurses, over their registration, and therefore over their subsequent work—control similar to that which prevails in the medical profession. By such means, and by the publication of a general Register of Nurses, the public would be enabled to distinguish a trained from an untrained nurse; and by the disciplinary powers of the Nursing Council any nurse who proved herself to be unworthy of trust could be removed from the recognised ranks of the calling. Then, and then only, would the Nurse *à la mode* disappear from the scene which she at present disgraces; and it is to be hoped that public opinion will be sufficiently awakened to the actual dangers she produces, that the Government may be persuaded to undertake the necessary legislation in this direction. It is certain to come sooner or later, but the earlier it comes the better will it be for the safety and welfare of the sick and for the credit of well-trained nurses."

THE MIDWIVES' REGISTRATION BILL.

This Bill will be introduced this year into the House of Commons by the Hon. A. de Tatton Egerton, M.P.

The *Lancet* states:—"The state Board of Health of Illinois have adopted regulations controlling the practice of midwifery. Hereafter no person will be allowed to practice as a midwife unless licensed. Each applicant must obtain a certificate and register with an officer of the board, known as the 'inspector of midwifery.' She shall attend only normal cases. In complicated labours she must send for a physician. Failing to do this she runs the risk of losing her license. Where the people are unable to pay a medical man, the nearest district physician employed by the city shall respond. The Act contains nothing relative to the qualifications for practice, but it is safe to assume that the board will demand a certain amount of preliminary training before granting a certificate."

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A Guarantee of Purity

Legal Matters.

INSTONE *v.* BOLLAND.

THIS case, which was tried in the Manchester County Court before His Honour, Judge Perry, is one in which an action was brought by the Superintendent of the White Cross House, Altrincham, against a nurse trained by her from 1890—1894. The condition upon which the nurse received training was that she should not afterwards carry on "the art, trade, or business" of a nurse within a radius of four miles from Altrincham. The case for the plaintiff, as stated by her counsel, Mr. M'Conkey, was that the defendant had broken the agreement by attending a case at Peel Causeway in October last. The plaintiff asked for an injunction, and claimed damages.

The defendant's case, as explained by Mr. Lloyd, was that she attended the patient out of old friendship for herself, and her family; that she was not paid a farthing, and did not even receive a gratuity; she was asked to receive a mourning dress but did not. She never had any intention of practising as a nurse in Altrincham. She was now exercising her profession in Llandudno. She was attending a case there when she learned that a friend in Altrincham was very ill, and, in accordance with a promise made some time before, she went at once to see her, not knowing whether she would be able to stay more than one day. She stayed a week, and gave what assistance she could, neither receiving nor expecting any fee. She lost the fees she would have earned had she remained in Llandudno. Another nurse was in attendance upon the case at Altrincham.

His Honour thought that it was almost as if an injunction had been asked for against the Good Samaritan. After hearing the evidence on both sides, the judge said that the action was a most unnecessary and futile one, and ought never to have been brought. He entered judgment for the defendant, with costs on the higher scale.

We are bound to say our sympathy is entirely with the defendant in this case. Whatever there may be to be said for and against the practice of obtaining a pledge from nurses which prevents their accepting cases within a given area, and we have our doubts as to whether this practice is at any time justifiable, there can be but one opinion as to the undoubted right of a nurse to pay a friendly visit within the prohibited district, and if, while there, she should help the nurse in charge of the case to lift the patient or to make her bed, is she on this account to be subject to an action at law? We feel sure that the good sense of the British

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