

business classes." This no doubt is true but it is to the way in which Mr. Gant proposes to meet this difficulty that we take the gravest exception. The "nurse attendant," who commands a salary of £25 a year is he says a necessity. He therefore urges a "plea for "State Registration" of the *whole* body of nurses or nurse attendants in one common legal register; just as—and for analagous reasons—all recognised members of the medical profession are enrolled on a legal register of professional qualifications."

When there is included in the Medical Register a list of all the unqualified and ignorant men who, because of their ignorance, are willing to take a low fee and undersell fully qualified practitioners, the analogy between the Medical Register and such a one as Mr. Gant proposes for the nursing profession may be drawn, not before. The fact that he can make this suggestion, with regard to nurses, shows how deficient is his appreciation of the value of proper professional training; and his consideration for the welfare of those who have conscientiously undergone it, and are entitled to the benefits, commercial and otherwise entailed by legal registration. If Mr. Gant requires a valet he does not presumably search for his career in the Medical Directory. If he requires the services of a lady's maid, why should he wish to find her name enrolled on a Register of Trained Nurses? Let him go to the Registry Office where such persons should be found.

One other point in the book we must mention. It seems most extraordinary that Mr. Gant, who insists so strongly on the necessity of investigating the antecedents of nurses should have made so little enquiry into those of the women attending his dying wife that he is able to write as follows.—"One of them at the moment of death, sat reading a novel, afar off in a window recess; the other, affrighted, immediately deserted her post at the bedside and ran out of the room. Both nurses (from homes) were utterly ignorant—never having been present at a death-bed—of the offices preparatory to placing the deceased in a coffin, and they would have left her (body) propped up in bed, as when death released her spirit. The housekeeper of a neighbour-friend was called in by these 'nurses' to perform their duty." If a medical man engages such women to attend his own wife what possible confidence can his patients feel in his recommendation of nurses.

Annotations.

THE CENTRAL POOR LAW CONFERENCE.

THE Central Poor Law Conference, which has now become an annual institution, was held on Thursday and Friday last week at the Council Chamber of the Guildhall, under the presidency of His Grace the Duke of Northumberland. The papers presented were on "The Aged Poor in Rural Workhouses," by Mrs. Fuller, Guardian of the Chippenham Union; "Overcrowding and Pauperism," by Mr. W. Crooks, L.C.C. (Chairman of the Poplar Union); "Tasks and Employments in Workhouses," by Mr. Councillor Askew (a Guardian of the Sculcoates Union); and the Reverend Dr. Cox (Chairman of the Brixworth Union). The discussions throughout were most lively and the Conference must be productive of good from the free interchange of ideas which takes place on these occasions. Dr. Cox roused some sensation and applause in the course of his speech, urging that stone breaking and gaskum picking were undesirable work for casuals, more especially women casuals. He contended that the tramp, if an occasional criminal, does not come to the workhouse in this character but because of destitution or poverty. "If the laws of England are going to punish poverty as a sin" said he "then there is not a spark of Christianity in them; and if the laws of England are going to punish idleness as harmful to the individual and the State (as I believe it to be), then let them be fair all round, and put the idle rich also to the oakum-picking and the stone-breaking, for they are far more of a curse to the community than the idle poor!"

We are afraid that Dr. Cox's views, admirable as they are from a logical standpoint will scarcely meet with the approval of the "leisured classes."

THE DUFFERIN FUND.

LORD CURZON recently presided over the annual meeting of the Countess of Dufferin's Fund at Calcutta, and we are glad to learn that the "steady and satisfactory expansion of the work throughout the country emphatically indicated the progress and stability of the movement." The work is one of the very greatest benefit to the women of India, but it is limited, as are most good works, by want of funds; we hope, therefore, that it will receive liberal support. In moving the adoption of the annual report, Sir William Cunningham deplored the immense difficulty of inducing *purdah*

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