

The second point is this, that there are no calls more sudden and irregular than those of midwifery practice. A midwife who is "drinking herself stupid" at the conclusion of a case may receive an urgent summons to another, a case, maybe, which will tax all her wits, all her nerve, to grapple with. What then? We are of opinion that the drunken midwife, both as regards the safety of the public and the honour of her colleagues, may be left to the Midwives' Board to deal with.

Dr. Moore, it is pointed out, raises as a possible danger that registration would lead to the establishment of an imperfectly educated order of medical practitioners. "The danger," says our contemporary, "is, we think, uppermost in the hearts of many members of our profession with regard to the State Registration of Nurses. Is it a real danger, or is it mere moonshine?"

We may draw attention to two points: (1) that it has been abundantly proved it is the ignorant not the well-trained woman who dares to assume the responsibilities of the medical practitioner, and (2) that with the creation of a Central Nursing Council there would for the first time be a body which could deal with such irregularities. The Bill introduced by Dr. Farquharson expressly provides that the "Act shall not be construed to affect or apply to the gratuitous nursing of the sick by friends or members of a family, and also it shall not apply to any person attending the sick for hire but who does not in any way assume to be a registered nurse."

The *Wolverhampton Express and Star* quotes the arguments used by Mr. Sydney Holland against State Registration for Nurses that "if a nurse gets a certificate of registration she will hold it as an evidence of ability and character for life," and that "there is great difficulty in striking anyone off a professional roll." Our contemporary makes the following comment:—"Really, this assumes that the public is stupider than is generally thought. The public will be perfectly aware of the value to put on a registration certificate. All that it will mean is that the holder successfully passed through a course of training of a thorough kind. Now there is no security that a woman who wears the nurse's uniform has had any training at all."

On Tuesday evening in last week Miss Isla Stewart, Matron of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, London, delivered an address on the Registration question to a meeting of nurses held at St. Cuthbert's Hall, Edinburgh. Miss Louisa Stevenson, President of the Society for the State Registration of Nurses, presided, and over a hundred ladies were present. They came from the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary, the City Hospital, and all the leading hospitals and nursing institutions. Miss Stewart, after pointing out the importance of the nurs-

ing profession, and its want of organisation, said that the state of affairs prevailing was unfair to the public and also to the trained nurses who had to compete with the half-trained women. Two Bills for the Registration of Nurses were at present before Parliament—one promoted by the Society for the State Registration of Nurses and the other by the Royal British Nurses' Association. Both Bills provided for a Central Council whose importance could not be over-estimated. It was absolutely essential that nurses should have some voice in the government of their profession. After describing the provisions of the Bill promoted by the State Registration Society, and introduced by Dr. Farquharson, Member for West Aberdeenshire, Miss Stewart pointed out that the General Council would be composed chiefly of nurses elected by and responsible to the body of nurses whose representatives they were. The institution of public examinations and the granting of certificates to the successful competitors, as also provided in the measure, would ensure a minimum standard of technical efficiency, which was very essential. Power would also be given to the central body to remove from its register the names of nurses who had proved unworthy of their position. Registration, Miss Stewart said, had been tried in several other countries and its success assured; and that such a movement was in the line of progress she had not the smallest doubt. Miss E. S. Haldane having spoken, Miss K. Burleigh, Matron of the Children's Hospital, Edinburgh, moved:—

"That in order to secure for sick nurses a minimum basis of training it is necessary for the nurses throughout the United Kingdom to be registered by the State, and that a certificate of registration should be awarded only after an examination set by the State through the Central Council."

Miss E. C. Sandford, late Matron of the City Hospital, Edinburgh, seconded, and, on the resolution being put to the meeting, it was carried unanimously. Miss L. L. Dock, Hon. Secretary of the International Council of Nurses, and Miss Stevenson also addressed the meeting.

Great regret was expressed by many private nurses present that time did not permit of longer discussion. They are all keenly interested and are hoping for another meeting shortly.

The words addressed by Miss Mary M. Riddle to the Nurses' Associated Alumnae of the United States at their Annual Convention at Philadelphia may be pondered over by British nurses at the present time. She said:—"If we bring to bear upon our unsolved problems a harmony of spirit, a unity of purpose, a concentration of attention, a willingness for details, and a painstaking perseverance to the end, our success is well-nigh assured. . . . The times are ripe. Never had we such

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