

of the smaller hospital, at which, he agreed, it would be unfair to compel probationers to remain. He said he was quite willing to elicit the opinions of the matrons of the smaller hospitals, but the allowing of exceptions would provide for their case.

The President said that he saw a great deal of difficulty in carrying out Dr. Wood's idea. It seemed rather premature to tie down the public to one place of education. He rather thought that they should look to the hospitals to evolve a system of protecting themselves from unreasonable migration of nurses. The public could be protected from imperfectly trained women by the stringency of the examination.

Dr. Gregory thought that the proposal would make a nurse a slave to an institution. Would it not be possible to modify the regulation by enacting that not less than six consecutive months should be taken at one institution.

Dr. Wood mentioned as an instance of the difficulty caused by migration, that the New Somerset Hospital had lately had a peremptory letter from a nurse asking for a certificate of nine months' training there, and inquiry showed that during that nine months she had been in eight different wards, had been badly reported on in each, and finally dismissed as unsatisfactory. But she could claim the certificate all the same.

The President remarked that the examination should sift out such cases as that.

Dr. Stevenson thought that it was rather unfair to ask nurses to do something which was not demanded of the medical profession. They had to consider the interests of the public, and he thought that, in some cases a training in two hospitals was better than a training in one.

Dr. Gregory remarked that some nurses might wish to take part of their time in fever hospitals.

Dr. Darley-Hartley reminded Dr. Gregory that the Council, as he thought, quite rightly, did not allow any time to count as hospital training unless spent in a general hospital, "used for medical and surgical purposes."

Dr. Hewatt said that, although he entirely agreed with Dr. Wood's first statement, which had been carried, he thought this second proposal too severe. There were very few large hospitals, and they could not take all the probationers, and yet it was natural that a nurse spending part of her time in a small institution would like to supplement that time by gaining more experience in a larger. They were there to test nurses by examination, and that test should be a safeguard against indifferent training.

The Secretary informed the Council that in one case it had permitted a break in the training altogether.

Dr. Wood withdrew his proposal for the present.

The solution of the difficulty of recognising as efficient "training" work in several hospitals appears to us to lie in the direction of co-operation of recognised institutions for training purposes, and not in permitting each individual pupil to meander about as she pleases. No system or discipline can be maintained by the latter method. No doubt the time will come when an expert central authority will recognise groups of hospitals which will combine and define a curriculum, passing the pupil nurses through general and special hospital wards during a three years' term of training.

## The Association for Promoting the Training and Supply of Midwives.

A well-attended and successful meeting of the above Association, at which H.R.H. Princess Henry of Battenberg was present, and presided over by the Archbishop of Canterbury, was held at the Westminster Palace Hotel, London, on Friday, November 4th.

The Archbishop in his opening remarks extended a cordial welcome to the delegates who were present from every part of England, including representatives of fifteen county councils, twelve borough and town councils, and twelve district councils. His Grace also referred to the historical fact that until sixty years ago no woman could legally practise midwifery in any parish unless licensed by the Bishop, and the names of the women so practising were asked for in the visitation returns, a fact which no doubt pointed to the belief that a midwife should not only possess professional qualifications, but should be of high character, so that she might be an influence for good and not evil in the homes of the poor.

We commend the point to the consideration of the Chairman of the London Hospital.

His Grace also pointed out that as the State had now wisely laid down restrictions as to the practice of midwifery by irresponsible persons it now rested with the community to see that there was an adequate supply of suitable trained women to do the work.

In the absence of Lord Brassey, Dr. Cullingworth then moved the following resolution:—

"That in view of the urgent need that exists in this country for a supply of properly trained midwives who, in working in conformity with the provisions of the Midwives' Act of 1902, will help to reduce the present high mortality of lying-in mothers and their children amongst the poor, this meeting cordially supports the Association for Promoting the Training and Supply of Midwives, and earnestly commends its work to the generous sympathy of all who are interested in the welfare of the country."

This was seconded by Mr. Singer in the absence of the Chief Rabbi, Dr. Adler.

Dr. Champneys (Chairman of the Central Midwives' Board) supported the resolution, and showed the importance of the health of the mothers of England to the State. The physical deterioration, of which so much is heard at the present time, unquestionably takes place, he said, during the period when the child is in its mother's care. The preservation of her life was, therefore, important on this ground alone. A remote effect of the instruction of midwives would no doubt be to instil good principles as to the feeding of young children into the minds of mothers.

He was followed by Mr. Wynne E. Baxter, who spoke from his own knowledge of the need for trained midwives, and, as an instance, told of four cases of tetanus in the newly-born which had come under his notice as coroner, and of the harm wrought by the use of unclean powder and dirty scissors.

Miss Lucy Robinson spoke with the knowledge of a practical midwife.

Dr. Williams, Medical Officer of Health of the Glamorgan County Council, gave some startling statistics as to the mortality in childbirth from puer-

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