

nurses. The "commode-like" chair, which is carried about from house to house and is the property of the midwife, is, needless to say, the cause of many cases of puerperal fever, which take place in the East. Lucky is it for the patients that sepsis is not so virulent out there, where plenty of water and a burning sun kill many microbes. But I have seen these chairs carried about in the streets, usually by a boy of 12 to 14, followed by many other urchins and children full of excitement, as they are well aware for what purpose the chair is required. The poor women have to sit on this chair over the circular hole, while the wealthier ones are given a cushion with a circular hole—usually covered with a turkey red twill cover and a frill to soften the seat.

The *raison d'être* of sitting on a chair is certainly based on common sense, for one can understand that the patient would have a great deal of power in bearing down when the labour pains come on; but I have known patients to get very exhausted, and have considerable hæmorrhage.

The midwife receives the infant from between the legs of the chair, and the vessel which is placed on the floor receives all the fluid discharges. The mother is then lifted up, and has a clean chemise, drawers, and a dressing gown or bedgown put on her, and she is helped on to her bed.

The poor women's beds consist of one, two or three mattresses according to their means, while the wealthier they are the more gorgeous are their European bedsteads. The four-post brass bedsteads made in Liverpool and Manchester, with crowns on the top, are the height of beauty and bliss to the proud possessors, whilst bright coloured silk cushions embroidered in gold are placed to support their backs and one under each arm. The hair is then dressed, and flowers placed in it, and should it be a boy the father is sent for, and as he enters, the women cover their faces and the wife kisses the hand of her lord and master and receives his congratulations whereon he at once orders the musicians to be sent for. The music usually consists of a very big tom-tom drum, bag-pipes, and cymbals. The musicians stand at the door and between the intervals they recite poetical congratulations and prophecies about the new male which has entered into this world whilst the women dance inside.

The proud mother like a queen on her throne can do nothing but smile and look happy—strange to say these women usually make a quick and rapid recovery and seem none the worse for the excitement of the event, and the influx of visitors who soon arrive.

Progress of State Registration.

The recent issue of *League News*, the journal of the League of St. Bartholomew's Hospital Nurses, contains an admirable summary of the present position of the Registration movement by the President, Miss Isla Stewart. Miss Stewart says: "The Members of the Central Hospital Council have lately drafted a Bill which they propose to lay before Parliament at its next sitting. In it they advocate the establishment of a Nurses' Directory instead of State Registration. This Council has always strongly and consistently opposed State Registration, and has expressed the opinion that any system of Registration would be detrimental to the public, and therefore harmful to Nurses. These are reasonable men, and therefore we must suppose that they know why this should be so, but I confess it is beyond my feeble woman's comprehension, neither do I understand why, this having been the opinion of the Council for so long, they are now advocating the establishment of a Directory, which is merely a feeble kind of Registration.

"Be that as it may, we must not overlook or under-estimate the danger of such suggestions. It is proposed that every Nurse trained in a Training School not carried on for gain should have a right to have her name and certain particulars entered on the Directory, which shall be kept by an 'Official Registrar,' who would either act on his own responsibility or under a Department of State.' It is worthy of note that it is not suggested that nurses are to have any voice in the matter. They are simply to be handed over to the Registrar, 'acting on his own authority,' or to the Department of State, much as though they were a flock of sheep; to be driven, no doubt with kindness and forbearance, to the green fields and pastures fair of the Central Hospital Council.

"Now, shortly, this is how we stand, the Select Committee of the House of Commons, has reported in favour of State Registration. The British Medical Association have declared with no uncertain sound in favour of it.

"The majority of fully-trained nurses are also on that side. I think therefore we need not greatly fear the Central Hospital Council. Indeed, the fact that the Council, which has always been so strongly opposed to State Registration, should so suddenly find it necessary to abandon their opposition to the extent of promoting an alternative scheme, seems to me an acknowledgment of the strength of our position. Surely it is not a great, an unreasonable thing we ask, only power to manage our own affairs and create and regulate our own profession."

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