

of the public, and particularly would be of much convenience to the practitioners of medicine and surgery that facilities, usable under proper guarantees in all parts of the United Kingdom should be given by Act of Parliament, or otherwise, for the authoritative certification of competent trained Nurses, who, when certified, should be subject to common rules of discipline; but that it does not appear to be within the province of the Council to propose legislation or other action for the object referred to, nor has the Council had any occasion to consider in detail the means by which the object might best be attained; and that under these circumstances the Council cannot give any opinion on the particular questions asked of it in paragraph 5 of the Memorandum of the British Nurses' Association."

To any ordinary person the meaning of this resolution would seem perfectly clear, viz., that the Council approved of the very necessary reforms proposed by the Association, but that it had no authority or power to take part in the work, or to consider its details.

But our readers will not, in view of the proceedings and statements of Mr. HENRY C. BURDETT, be astonished to learn that the *Hospital* announced that the Council had "rejected the proposals of the British Nurses' Association."

En passant, it is an interesting example of the prophetic powers of the same journal that it, in December, 1889, stated "that there is every prospect of an adequate Bill for the regulation of midwives, receiving the sanction of the Legislature during the next session of Parliament." It is now known that the "adequate Bill" proved so farcical that it was laughed out of existence, that a more "adequate Bill," presented in 1891, was pulverised and withdrawn, and that, in 1893, the "prospect" of legislation on the subject is invisible.

The replies received from the Hospitals to the circular addressed to them, are summarised as follows, in the second annual report of the Association. "Nearly all declined to accept the proposal. Even those who thoroughly approved the principle of

Registration argued that to control Nurses who had left the Hospital service was no part of the work which Hospital Committees exist to carry out."

WHO WAS HER NEIGHBOUR?

AGAIN it is from the *Daily Chronicle* we cull yet another short and simple annal of an exceedingly tragic nature. There are few parts of the United Kingdom more densely and darkly heathenish than some parts of Essex. Ignorance, poverty, and inaccessibility have much to account for, and their victims, as a rule, have sunk silently under the swift current of life without making a sign to the busy world beyond. But now and again a cry sounds out from the columns of a newspaper, and reaches the ear of the army of priests, levites, and samaritans, and cuts the heart of all save the most hardened. This time it is a poor woman, a labourer's wife, dying in childbed from neglect and starvation. Only 6s. a week during the winter had been the earnings of the husband, and a distress warrant for 5s. could not be satisfied in the wretched home. Not 5s. worth of furniture, clothing, bedding, and utensils, in a place where the agony of childbirth, the requirements of supreme weakness, the nurture of a helpless infant were expected! If it is heartrending to think of, what must it have been to endure? From another source we learn that there was not a rag of flannel in which to wrap the new-born child—nothing but a part of an old torn apron. No fire, no bed-covering, no gruel, or even tea for the poor exhausted mother; and that of her three women neighbours not one would lend the poor creature anything in her dreadful extremity. No wonder the jury censured these un-neighbourly neighbours. But who ordered that distress warrant to be issued? What will justify us whose selfishness or prejudice bars the way to reforms that will help to reach the causes of these great wrongs? Yet it was a very comfortable person, who protested the other day that she could not endure to hear of Parish Councils, "because they will put notions into the heads of agricultural labourers and their wives." (?) Pray God let us have any notions, rather than stolid apathy and sodden hopeless misery such as is revealed by such an incident as the above. For "the least of these His brethren" will inquiry be made; and to us in comfort and at ease, an awful voice will sound some day, as it did to Cain of old, "Thy brother's blood crieth unto thee from the ground."

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