

credit of the Nursing profession that, as soon as the work was organised, and the necessity for Nurses made known, there was no lack of those who were ready and willing to respond to the need, and to work loyally, bravely, faithfully, and unselfishly under dangerous and trying circumstances. But the laurels which would have been the portion of the Royal British Nurses' Association under the old régime must be laid at other feet.

Students' Midwifery.

ON the 19th inst. a complaint was lodged against St. Thomas's Hospital at a coroner's inquest touching the death of an infant attended by a student-accoucheur from that Hospital. It appeared, from the evidence, that the mother had made arrangements to be attended by somebody from the maternity department at St. Thomas's Hospital, but on the husband going for the attendant there was some delay, and the infant was born before they reached the house. The accoucheur promised to come again later in the day, but he did not call until Sunday night, when the baby was dead. Dr. Percy Blaber, junior obstetric house-physician, said the cause of death was imperfect aeration of the lungs, and if twenty medical men had been in attendance earlier they could have done nothing to prolong the child's life.

Mr. James Oxley, the obstetric clerk who attended the mother, in his evidence said, "although the child was very weakly, he did not think it would die so soon, otherwise he would have informed the house-physician, who was his superior officer. He considered himself in attendance on the child as well as the mother, although he was not qualified."

Now the conduct of Mr. Oxley in this instance appears to us to have been somewhat casual. We note that he stated at the inquest that "he did not think the child would die so soon." Did he think it would die at all? If so, it was surely his duty to acquaint the house-physician with the fact. A further question presents itself. Is it the duty of students to report *all* cases which they attend to a responsible medical officer? If not, why not? Is it right, under any circumstances, to leave an *ordinary* case of midwifery unvisited for thirty-six hours? We believe it to be an unwritten rule that, unless a competent Nurse is in attendance, a visit to a woman newly confined should be paid within six hours after delivery. This case was not an ordinary one, and there was a delicate baby, whose condition,

as proved by Dr. Percy Blaber at the inquest was hopeless from its birth. It was, therefore, plainly a grave error of judgment on the part of an unqualified medical student to "consider himself in attendance on the child as well as the mother." A duly qualified medical man should undoubtedly have been called in.

It would be instructive to know how many cases of midwifery Mr. James Oxley had attended before he took this responsibility upon himself. We are of opinion that if the midwifery of midwives requires investigation, as undoubtedly it does, still more does the midwifery of medical students.

The present system of allowing medical students whose experience in practical midwifery is next to nothing, to attend cases of confinement *without supervision* cannot be defended.

We hope the day is not far distant when a medical student will be required to conduct at least twenty-five cases under supervision and to pass a theoretical examination before he attends a case on his own responsibility. Until this rule obtains, the standard for medical students is in reality lower than that required of midwives. We confess we feel sympathy for the student who, having seen perhaps four confinement cases, is sent out to attend cases on his own responsibility. The question is one for Hospital authorities, and appears to us to demand attention.

Appointment.

OUR readers will greatly regret to learn that Miss J. P. Raeynvaan has been compelled, owing to ill health, to resign her position as Lady Superintendent of the Wilhelmina Hospital at Amsterdam. But the great work effected by this noble woman, during her long term of office, in the improvement of the Nursing of the sick in the Institution over which she has presided with such signal success, will live on for all time, and will also be an example which many of her countrywomen will emulate.

Miss L. Kruyse, hitherto District Nurse of the Dutch Board of Protestants, first at Zwolle, and afterwards at Rotterdam, has been appointed to succeed Miss Raeynvaan as Lady Superintendent of the Wilhelmina Hospital, and we wish her a career as useful and honoured as that of her predecessor has been.

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