

well as satisfy examiners in a theoretical examination.

But to return to Mrs. Gamp. We left her, where our General Hospitals have left her, in a position of profound incompetency and ignorance. She has not remained there, however, but has struck out a line for herself, for her own improvement, which, if it leave very much to be desired, has yet made of her in many instances an exceedingly skilled person. Unable to obtain the training she specially desires in our General Hospitals, she has come to the conclusion that it is unnecessary for her to obtain *any* training there, and has consequently devoted her energies to obtaining a special training in Monthly Nursing and Midwifery only in our Lying-in Hospitals. She goes to a Lying-in Hospital for two or three months, passes an examination in Monthly Nursing, or Midwifery, and emerges in the latter instance to undertake, to a great extent entirely on her own responsibility, the nursing and treatment of women at a most critical period.

Now I do not for a moment deny that a capable woman, who, having received such training, goes on practising Midwifery, may not become very efficient in this particular branch, or that there are some geniuses who, though they know nothing of general nursing, have become so perfect as Midwives as to leave little to be desired in this respect; but I do unhesitatingly say that these are the few, and not the many, and that in any legislation it is the many and not the few who have to be considered, and to express my firm conviction, with which some present will probably disagree, that all persons who have not received general training should be eligible to act as Monthly Nurses only, whether they are possessed of a knowledge of Midwifery or not. That is, that they should work only directly under medical supervision, and should be obliged to send for a medical man in every lying-in case which they may attend. I believe that all Midwives who are also trained Nurses will agree with me in this, and that most trained heads of Lying-in Schools are of opinion that it is unsatisfactory to give a three months' training in Midwifery to persons who have received no general training. To allow women who have only received three months' training to attend critical cases, and to send, or not send, at their own discretion, for medical assistance, appears to me to put a greater amount of power into their hands than is in any way justifiable.

It is also, I think, important that a Midwife, or a *Nurse-Midwife* as I should prefer to call her, in order to show that she has received training in general nursing, should always work in connection with a medical man, not under his direct

supervision in every case, but that she may know to whom to send in case of emergency, and may be certain that one who has specially given his attention to operative and difficult cases of Midwifery will come to her assistance in case of need. An obstetric physician will always come immediately if a Midwife, upon whose knowledge he can rely, lets him know that a case is urgent. A general practitioner may, or may not, come at once, and may, or may not, give skilled assistance when he does arrive, therefore, for the sake both of the patient and the Midwife, it is, I think, essential that she should know beforehand to whom she intends to apply for aid in any difficulty.

We must, I think, recognise the fact that the Midwife of the present day has, for the most part, no claim to the title of Nurse, whether as Nurse-Midwife, Midwifery, or Obstetric Nurse, or any other such name, inasmuch as she has received no general training. The fault is not so much that the Midwife is not a trained Nurse, as that, for the most part, trained Nurses are not Midwives. If this were so I believe the person trained in Midwifery only would cease to exist. If our trained Nurses applied for positions as Midwives, by the law of the survival of the fittest, they would obtain them rather than partially trained persons, and those who are at present Midwives only would be obliged to obtain general training, in order to make themselves eligible for the posts they seek. At present the Midwife, as such only, has almost complete possession of the field in her own particular department.

On looking over the Register of Nurses, issued by the Royal British Nurses' Association, I find that out of 2,396 members only 121 possess the diploma of the London Obstetrical Society, and four more an Edinburgh or Dublin diploma. Beyond these a further number of 173 possess a certificate of training in some Lying-in Hospital, whether that certificate is for Monthly Nursing or Midwifery, is for the most part unstated, and therefore is probably the former. Also, I may here state it as my experience, that all Lying-in Hospitals are anxious to send up for examination by the London Obstetrical Society as many of their Midwifery pupils as have any reasonable chance of satisfying the examiners, and all pupils are keen to pass this examination because of the additional prestige it brings them, therefore we may take it, not as an absolute, but as a general rule, that all Midwifery pupils capable of passing the Obstetrical Society's examination present themselves for its examination, and that those who do not do so, refrain only because of their inability to pass it. If they cannot satisfy the examiners of the Obstetrical Society they are not competent to

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