

fed, and quiet, as the surgeon in charge attends to the dressing himself; but with a medical case it is otherwise. The life or death of the patient depends largely upon the skill of the nurse, and the fidelity with which she carries out medical directions, and her qualifications must be of a very high order. We cannot endorse Miss Broadwood's theory that women deeply interested in surgical work are "unable to bear the monotony of maternity work." As a matter of fact, to any one who really intelligently understands her work, it presents endless varieties, and all the interest that a woman, however keen, can desire, for a nurse to be a safe attendant, "whether the doctor is there or no," must without doubt be able to act as a midwife, and when she does so, her duties are not limited to the carrying out of medical directions, but include the responsibility of diagnosis, a responsibility which is attached to no other branch of nursing, and this—requiring as it does a large amount of skill and intelligence—is a continual pleasure to a really competent nurse, interested in her work. At the same time, certainly no one is competent to perform these most responsible duties who does not possess the very moderate degree of knowledge required, in order to obtain the certificate of the London Obstetrical Society, and no one who does not possess this certificate, should, in our opinion, be allowed to attend maternity cases. One other point we should like to bring out with regard to these cottage nurses—it seems to be always assumed that their intelligence must necessarily be most limited in character—a fact which must surely prevent the County Nursing Associations from obtaining precisely the class of women they require. Some of the daughters of artisans are capable of assimilating the highest training, and we ourselves are acquainted with several trained nurses, holding the certificates of various large training schools, who belonged to the artisan class, and who now hold responsible positions as hospital matrons.

Following Miss Broadwood, Mrs. Lombe moved a resolution, proposing the formation of a central council, to further the development of district nursing in the County, and then Mrs. Gurney Buxton addressed the meeting, and stated that she considered it desirable that some uniform minimum of training should be insisted upon. She also quoted at length from Lady Laura Ridding's paper, on the Work of Midwives and Maternity Nurses in Rural Districts, which has already been printed in these columns.

Dr. Beverley, who for many years was on the medical staff of the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital, said he presumed he had been asked to take part in the proceedings for this reason, and because he had been associated with others in promoting the formation of the Norwich staff of nurses—a society

which provided nurses for the poor as well as the rich. He was of opinion it was wrong in principle to introduce a highly trained hospital nurse into cottage homes. The nurses should be selected from the class which they were called to nurse, and their training should as far as possible, be conducted amongst the class of cases and people they would have to nurse by and bye. But this assumption if carried to a logical conclusion, would necessitate that persons of high degree should be attended in illness only by ladies of title, and that artisans should be medically treated by men of their own class, who possess some slight knowledge of medical matters—probably experience gained as bone setters, and herbalists, in the course of treating veterinary ailments might be deemed sufficient qualification.

Dr. Beverley strongly expressed his opinion that it was absolutely necessary that only trained certificated nurses should undertake midwifery among the poor, and that they should not be allowed to undertake ordinary district nursing. We are entirely in agreement with him on this point. It is, however, most undesirable that the maternity nurse should undertake all the housework of her patient, neither do we think that the hands of most working women are suitable for maternity work at all. Death may lurk in the dirt which is ingrained into them, and especially in the finger nails.

Miss Broadwood said that she was quite in favour of certificated monthly nurses, not midwives. We have already pointed out, that a nurse who knows nothing of what is going to happen until it has happened, is not a safe person to be left in charge of a maternity case, and that one with a knowledge of midwifery would be able to discover, and take steps for dealing with conditions which might prove fatal in a case where a nurse lacked this knowledge.

Dr. Crowfoot, of Beverley, supported Dr. Beverley in his remarks as to the necessity for separating maternity from general district nursing. We are glad that medical men are pointing this out to the public. In conclusion, we believe that County Associations have a useful career before them, if they confine themselves to providing cottage helps, or if they maintain fully qualified nurses. But to give women a smattering of nursing, and then to allow them to undertake responsible duties which should only be performed by trained nurses, is not to be encouraged either in the interests of the sick or of the nursing profession.

The Queen and her Wounded Soldiers.

THE Queen has intimated her intention of visiting Netley Hospital this (Saturday) afternoon, in order to see those of the wounded who have returned from the Soudan.

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