

Professional Review.

THE MIDLAND POOR LAW CONFERENCE.

We have received a copy of the papers read at the thirteenth Annual Poor Law Conference of the West Midland District, published by Messrs. P. S. King and Son, 2 and 4, Great Smith Street, Westminster, price 1s.

The President, Mr. H. J. Manton, until recently Chairman of the Birmingham Board of Guardians, in opening the Conference, said: that the local press of the City of Birmingham, was of very doubtful mind as to the value of these Conferences. Some Guardians even objected to them as a waste of money. There was truth in the statement that a stay-at-home Board was apt to get out of date in its ideas, and Poor Law Guardians, above all, stood in need of rubbing off angularities. This was one function of a Conference. The exchange of ideas was bound to be valuable and the education of Guardians resulted to the public advantage. The second paper, by Miss O'Reilly, Assistant Secretary of the Meath Workhouse Attendants' Association, was of especial interest to nurses. Miss O'Reilly asserted that the number of sick, infirm, and dying people in Workhouses, is greater than is generally known, in many cases, the infirm being ineligible for the infirmary, and the sick and dying too ill to be removed there. The nursing of these sick persons was frequently left entirely to wardsmen and wardswomen chosen from themselves. She urged that pauper nursing had nothing to excuse it, even on the score of economy.

Miss O'Reilly then gave detailed instances of nursing, or want of nursing, in Poor Law Unions, such as had led the Countess of Meath to found an Association to provide attendants for Workhouse inmates. Lady Meath has, at her own expense, placed more than eighty young women as probationers in various Hospitals and Homes, in order to qualify them for the position of Workhouse Attendants. The Association aims not only at providing attendants for the aged and infirm, but also at introducing a higher and more moral tone into the wards. In the discussion which followed, Mr. T. L. Murray Browne (Local Government Inspector) said he would like it cleared up whether the Association aimed at training nurses or attendants. If the former, there was a great deal to be said for training a class of attendants, who would take care of the aged and infirm who did not belong to the sick class, but, if, as he gathered from the paper, the girls were to be trained as nurses, the Association must be kept up to the full standard of training, otherwise an inferior and bad class of trained nurses would be put on the market and bring down the standard of nursing.

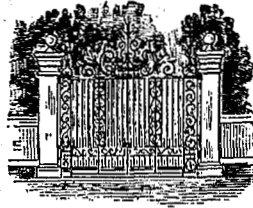
The Rev. W. Fawcett said that the difficulty was not to get nurses and attendants, but to keep them. Large Unions were comparatively free from this difficulty, because the infirmaries were entirely separate from the workhouse; but in small Unions, with only one or two nurses, friction almost invariably arose between the Matron and the nurse.

Alderman Stanton (Warwick) thought nurses required too much—at any rate, some of them did. Young persons of twenty or twenty-one, with about a year's training, objected to control by a Matron; but he thought such young nurses needed control.

This, no doubt, is true. But, in our opinion, nurses of twenty years of age, with a year's training, are quite out of place in Workhouse Infirmarys.

Outside the Gates.

AN HISTORICAL EVENT.



THE Great Meeting in support of Women's Suffrage which is to take place at the Queen's Hall, Langham Place, on the evening of Thursday, June 29th, is arousing an unprecedented amount of enthusiasm amongst women of all classes, and there is no

doubt that it will be an epoch-marking event in the history of women in this country.

Mrs. Henry Fawcett, L.L.D., will preside, and she will be supported on the platform by Miss Susan B. Anthony, who, at the age of eighty years, has crossed the Atlantic to speak for the enfranchisement of her sex, and to encourage European women in their just demand for the Parliamentary vote; splendid and beloved, it is impossible to realise all that the spirit of Susan Anthony has accomplished for women all over the world, or to estimate their devotion and gratitude to her. We have little doubt of the reception she will receive from all those fortunate enough to be present when she rises to speak on the 29th.

Lady Henry Somerset, Hon. Mrs. Arthur Lyttleton, Frau Cauer and Frau Stritt (Germany), Mrs. Croly U.S.A. (Founder of Sorosis), Dr. Alletta Jacobs (Holland), Mlle. Vidart (Switzerland), Fröken Gina Krog (Norway), Dr. Anita Augspurg (Berlin), Mme. Klerck Von Hogendorp, and other delegates of the International Congress of Women, are all to take part in this great meeting.

And we are pleased to notice that many eminent men are giving their support to the woman's cause. The Right Hon. Leonard Courtney, M.P., Mr. Faithfull Begg, M.P., Hon. W. P. Reeves (Agent-General for New Zealand), Hon. J. A. Cockburn (Agent-General for South Australia) will address the meeting, and will be supported by many liberal minded members of Parliament. It is just going to be a grand gathering, and will, no doubt, be crowded to the doors.

By the kind permission of Mrs. Wynford Philipps, a meeting was held last week at the Women's Institute, to ventilate the forthcoming International Congress of Women, at which Lady Aberdeen gave some particulars of the programme.

Lady Aberdeen said no fads would be discussed, and the Council wished to hear both sides when debatable questions were on the Agenda. She aroused a little derisive laughter, by hoping some woman would be brave enough to bring forward arguments against women's suffrage. It will certainly be conclusive evidence of lack of convincing arguments

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