

part in any legislation that might be passed. He certainly regarded the question as a most important one, and he promised to bring it before his colleagues during the coming autumn with a view, if possible, to deal with it in a practical manner.

We cannot but regret to notice that both the Midwives' and Nurses' Associations were represented by medical men and laymen, and not as they should have been by practical midwives and trained nurses, who alone are in a position to voice their own professional needs. We cannot believe that the substitution of licensing for midwives, instead of registration and legal status, by laymen and medical men, can be approved by midwives possessed of an intelligent appreciation of their position. Of course, members of the Royal British Nurses' Association realise that under their new bye-laws the medical element is supreme, and have ceased to hope for any representation or power to express their own opinions on professional questions.

We can but hope that the Duke of Devonshire and his colleagues, in considering legislation for midwives, will recognise the necessity of giving them just representation on the Board, which will control their professional and personal rights.

And we are more firmly convinced than ever that the only satisfactory method of settling the midwife question will be to legislate on broad lines for all classes of nurses—medical, surgical, and obstetric. To do this, in the best possible manner, a Select Committee of the House of Commons should be appointed, to consider and report upon the whole question.

BED SORES.

THERE is no doubt that one of the greatest tests of good nursing is the prevention of bed sores, and it so often happens nowadays that we hear of the occurrence of bed sores being very little accounted, that the need for emphasising their successful prevention as the mark of a good nurse is apparent. One institution, we understand, states that in a large hospital it is "impossible to give the individual care to a patient necessary to the prevention of bed sores." Superintendents of Convalescent and Incurable Homes can tell of the condition in which patients arrive, from hospitals of repute, not only as regards cleanliness, which frequently leaves much to be desired, but even with bed sores; and again private nurses swell the tale, one nurse on her arrival finding a

patient, who had for months been attended by two nurses, lying on tow, unprotected in any way, and with bed sores on hips and back! Such conditions are apparently consistent with "smart" nursing, but it cannot be too strongly emphasised that though smartness at the time of the visit of a medical man is desirable, and, indeed, necessary in a good nurse, the real test of her qualifications is in his absence, and more especially at night, when no one but the patient knows whether the sheet is drawn at frequent intervals, making all the difference between comfort and discomfort, whether his back is washed with soap and water before spirit and starch are applied, and whether, should his condition require it, he is frequently turned from side to side. Or, perhaps, even the patient is not in a condition to know whether this is done, and the fulfilment and neglect of her duty in this respect is known to the nurse alone.

But, good nursing entails not only the ability to cut a dressing after the most approved pattern, but the conscientious performance of all duties which make for the comfort of the patient, and it is especially in the fulfilment of unknown but necessary duties that the real worth of a nurse is tested. There is no doubt that a nurse should regard the occurrence of a bed sore as reflecting keen disgrace upon herself, and her hospital, and we are glad to believe that all good nurses do so regard it.

HOW DISEASE IS SPREAD.

THE proposal of the Chelsea Guardians to send the children in their workhouse schools to cottage homes at Margate is excellent, as regards the children, but there is another point of view which requires consideration, and which cannot be too forcibly placed before the public. It is this. That if all these children, suffering from an infectious disease of a loathsome nature, travel to their destination in public railway carriages, the result will be the spread of ringworm amongst other passengers by the same train. The dangers of railway travelling have already been enlarged upon, and we are told that the germs of tuberculosis abound in the dust containing the dried particles of the expectoration of tuberculous patients. Further, travellers in third class, if not in other carriages, are by no means free from the risk of pediculi, and if ringworm also is to be added to the category, the ills to which they are subjected will indeed be manifold.

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