

what is right and to advance the honour and dignity of their chosen calling. And the lesson to be learnt from this is one which we would urge upon all nurses, the need of education. By this we do not mean the possession of that academic learning which is only at present obtainable by the few. What we do desire is that nurses should cultivate that broader knowledge which results from contact with persons and things, that they should take pains to get into touch with their generation and with public affairs, and no longer consider that they have done their whole duty when they have performed the routine work demanded of them. We believe that in the new century women will increasingly be compelled to earn their own living, and this, though it may be considered a hardship by some, is, we believe, one of the greatest blessings it can confer upon them, for, with self-support comes self-respect, and a self-respecting and dignified attitude commands the regard of others. It is this great virtue of self-respect which individually and collectively we must seek to cultivate. There are moments when all of us have felt "shabby within," and how humiliating such a feeling is. However trim, smart, and clean we may be outside, we feel this is all worthless if the inner dignity is absent, and this is impossible of attainment without self-respect. Moreover, internal shabbiness is incompatible with really good work. We must be self-respecting to be effective. Closely allied to this feeling is an appreciation of the dignity of labour, that labour which makes self-respect a possibility to us. How little this has been understood in the past. Labour has indeed been frequently held to be something degrading and dishonourable, carrying with it loss of caste and social position. We are attaining now a juster view and realize that labour is the greatest benefactor of the human race. It is not the hand hardened by toil, but the one which is kept useless and white at the expense of others, which is despicable. But there is another form of meanness which we hope will vanish in the coming century. Some of us work because we must, we eat honest food won by honest toil, and then are ashamed to own our connection with the work by which we earn our living. Let the first lesson of the coming century to one and all be that of the dignity of labour, let us revel in it, extol it, be proud of it, and be ashamed of nothing but idleness and dependence.

### Annotations.

#### MIDWIFERY IN AMERICA.

In a paper read before the section on "Obstetrics and Diseases of Women" of the American Medical Association, Dr. C. S. Bacon recently discussed in an interesting manner the midwife question in the United States. While we do not agree with every suggestion put forward by Dr. Bacon, much that he says is worthy of consideration, and we note with pleasure his statement that he "approached the subject with no feeling of hostility to midwives, for they did a work which could scarcely be done by any other agency." It is interesting to learn that American women were originally in the habit of employing physicians in their confinements, and that it was European immigrants, who were used to the services of midwives at home, who created a demand for them which led to their importation. Dealing with the unsatisfactory side of midwives' midwifery the lecturer mentioned as contributing causes the social element from which midwives were recruited. They were frequently poor widows, or wives of labourers, who augmented the family income in this way. The neglect of midwifery education by the teachers in the Medical Colleges of the country, and the general and almost complete neglect of a system of midwife education or control, which had given rise to inefficiency in the details of the legitimate obstetric practice on the part of midwives, especially in the line of asepsis, assumption of the management of abnormal labours, assumption of medical and surgical practice quite outside obstetrics, and the illegal and immoral practice of the induction of abortion. Dr. Bacon then dealt with the needs of the future, and said that undoubtedly there was a demand for midwives. He expressed the opinion that the education given to a midwife should be such as to enable a woman of average intelligence and education to conduct a normal labour safely and to care for the mother and child during the puerperal period, and suggested that the education of midwives, which consisted largely of drill in obstetric nursing, would probably be best carried on in conjunction with a Medical College, with that of medical students, during a ten months' course.

We consider that there are grave objections to the education of midwives being conducted in a Medical College. We are realizing more and more that a midwife, as such, is an obsolete

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