

acted as midwives should have sufficient knowledge to know when to call in medical assistance. No more important and far-reaching measure of social reform had been before the House for a long time.

The Bill was read a second time.

The Duke of Northumberland was erroneously instructed by the promoters of the Bill in estimating the number of women now practising midwifery. According to the Census returns the number of midwives in England and Wales is 966 for the counties of London and Lancashire, so that the number for the whole country cannot be more than 3,000. The Bishop of Winchester, in arguing in favour of the registration of midwives because working women prefer the attendance of one of their own sex, seems to have overlooked the fact that women as well as men are qualified medical practitioners.

We do not find in the Bill, or in any amendment, provision for the appointment of two women on the Midwives Board, as stated by Earl Russell. One woman is to be appointed by the Lord President of the Privy Council. Perhaps Earl Russell believes that the representative of the Royal British Nurses' Association must be a woman. One great defect of the Bill in our view is that there is absolutely no provision for the presence of even one midwife upon it.

The International Congress of Nurses.

MORNING SESSION.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 20TH, 1901.

HISTORY OF VISITING NURSE WORK IN AMERICA.

By MISS HARRIET FULMER,

Superintendent of the Visiting Nurses' Association of Chicago.

(Continued from p. 498.)

Miss Fulmer then gave a short account of the distinctive features of the principal visiting nursing societies at present at work in America, and concluded her interesting paper with a summary detailing the value of visiting nursing and the benefits accruing to the sick by its means.

SUMMARY.

After laying before you all the plans and operations of the various organisations of this character now under way, we leave it to you to choose the best means of operation. With the active professional worker the neutral lines seem the best lines. Whether the work can be carried on with or without the religious element depends upon the locality. The demand for this work is usually spontaneous,

and not always will the same people recognise its necessity. In one instance it may be the physician of the locality, in another the clergy, in another the philanthropic and benevolent wealthy. The question is: shall the work be non-sectarian and neutral, or shall it be a specified charity by itself, or operated in connection with churches or dispensaries, or with the city physicians? Or shall it be a department of the organised charities which already exist in every State of the Union? No one can advise any special plan, but we can all urge communities to provide for the care of the sick poor in their own homes, where the well members of the family may be taught a responsibility towards their own sick that they would not otherwise have. Not more than one-third of the cases usually helped can enter hospitals, and many do go who should not, for in these instances a home may be broken up, and the responsibility that should be borne by the individual shifted to an institution.

Many contend that the work comes very near being a luxury to the poor. If it is, then every asylum founded for charity is a luxury, and a luxury, too, that relieves the individual of any dependence upon his own exertions, and has no results to show save that of pauperisation.

Before closing, just a word as to the woman detailed for such work as this. Only can she be successful when she has passed through a broad general training in the best nurses' schools that can be found. With this must be a refinement and culture which gives the courage and patience to overcome the overwhelming difficulties to be encountered.

Armed with these weapons, she goes forth as no other philanthropic worker, with a profession so valuable and at once so practical that there is no mistaking the need she fills.

For the past ten years it has been clearly shown "that the district visiting nurse work is the best means at the smallest cost of helping the conditions of the poor, sick or well." Hospitals do much good; but, after all, they offer but outside methods of education. It is by reaching the people in their own homes and teaching them to utilise and make the best of what they have that lasting good may be accomplished.

Legal Matters.

"DRESSED IN THE GARB OF A NURSE."

A few weeks ago, a young lady, described as fascinating, and dressed as a nurse, took lodgings in the town of Llandilo. She announced herself as the niece of a well-known gentleman in South Wales, and her plan of campaign was to ingratiate herself with an old lady who has a son in Carmarthen Asylum. By a plausible story, in

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