

Nursing Echoes.

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Mrs. Bedford Fenwick expresses herself as delighted with her short visit to Edinburgh and Glasgow. "I learned a lot," she says, "that is of paramount importance, and I greatly appreciated the courtesy of the medical superintendents and Matrons of the Western Infirmary and Ruchill Fever Hospital, at Glasgow, and of the City Hospital, in Edinburgh, in making such delightful arrangements for my reception when permitting me to address the nurses on State Registration of Trained Nurses. It is the first time I have had a chance of discussing this vital question with my own countrywomen, and I enjoyed it thoroughly. Next week I shall have something to say on this visit."

Sir John Batty Tuke, M.D., took the chair at a meeting in Edinburgh last week called to consider the best way of making use of the Midwives' Bill. Mrs. Heywood Johnstone spoke interestingly on the matter, pointing out that to supply the need of good midwives amongst the poor co-operation and consideration would be necessary; she proposed a resolution that associations should be formed to deal with the matter, which was seconded by Mrs. Percy Boulnois. A lively discussion ensued, several ladies present describing their experiences—the majority being of opinion that the working-class midwife who would scrub and clean and arrange the household, as well as deliver and nurse the mother, were most acceptable to the poor, who shrink from exposing their poverty and lack of appliances to ladies, though how this class of midwife was to be educated for her professional work was not defined. A lady doctor present persistently alluded to the midwife as a "nurse," and said that different classes of midwives would be necessary for the different classes of patients and in rural and urban districts.

Mrs. Bedford Fenwick remarked that now that Parliament had protected the title of midwife and given legal status to these workers, she hoped that the old habit in almost universal use in and out of Parliament of describing midwives as "nurses" would cease. Midwives were not necessarily nurses, and she hoped that before long trained nurses would be also registered by the State and their professional rights protected. Mrs. Fenwick also considered the combination

of scrubber and midwifery practitioner highly dangerous from an aseptic standpoint for the lying-in woman, and she doubted if medical men would permit for a moment their rich patients to run such a risk.

Surely the process of child-bearing and its attendant dangers are the same in town and country; and it is well known that refined, well-trained nurse-midwives are greatly appreciated amongst the very poorest in cities. Why, therefore, should the rural poor object to the attentions of this class of midwife? That the rural poor cannot afford to pay for highly-skilled help in their hours of need is always the excuse of county nursing associations for providing them with a cheaper and less efficient attendant. This may be sound finance, but it is an unsatisfactory practice. The suggestion made by one speaker that parish midwives—as well as parish doctors—should be provided for the very poor out of the rates is the best solution of the question. But let the midwife be well educated and efficiently trained, otherwise she will continue to be a national danger. All these points, said Sir John Batty Tuke, would probably be considered and arranged for by the Midwives' Board.

The following appointments have already been made on the Central Midwives' Board:—The Incorporated Midwives' Institute has appointed Dr. Cullingworth; Mr. Heywood Johnstone, M.P., has been appointed by the Association of County Councils; Mr. Ward Cousins, of Portsmouth, by the Royal College of Surgeons; Dr. Young, of Westbourne Square, by the Society of Apothecaries; and, as we reported last week, the Royal British Nurses' Association have actually selected a woman—Miss Oldham, Matron of the Hospital for Paralysis and Epilepsy, having been appointed. Wonders will never cease! Personally, we could have wished that the Midwives' Institute had done likewise.

For more than a quarter of a century Miss Mathews, better known as Sister Pitcairn, has been a familiar figure at St. Bartholomew's Hospital. She has now resigned her position, as has also Sister Mary (Miss Tait). We hope they may both enjoy for long a well-earned rest after their long and honourable careers of activity and responsibility.

A committee has been formed in West Hampstead with the object of establishing a branch of the Queen Victoria Jubilee Institute for Nurses, where there is said to be work for at least two nurses. The Chairman of the Committee is the Rev. E. N. Sharpe, Emmanuel Vicarage, West Hampstead; the Hon. Treasurer, Dr. Harcourt Gervis, M.D., 1, Lyncroft Mansions; and the Hon.

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