

Stewart Oration, to be delivered annually in honour of their dear colleague.

The members present were evidently very anxious that a scheme for a permanent memorial to Miss Stewart should be formulated, and the President, after some discussion, promised to place the suggested schemes before the members in the forthcoming League Journal, and ask for expressions of opinion.

At the conclusion of the meeting, tea was served in the Nurses' Home.

### Nurses' Employment Agencies.

On and after the first day of January, 1911, the London County Council General Powers Act, 1910, decrees that "no person shall carry on an employment agency without a licence from the Licensing Authority, authorising him to do so." It thus follows that for the first time all persons carrying on a private nursing business, that is, acting as an agent to provide nurses to the public for gain in the metropolis, will come under the provisions of this Act, including charitable institutions like hospitals, and nursing homes and institutions, including co-operations of nurses.

It will be necessary, therefore, for a person carrying on a nursing agency to make application in writing to the Licensing Authority under his own name, and state the nature of the work and the address at which he carries on the business within one month after the Licensing Authority shall have given public notice of the effect of the provisions of the part of the Act concerning Employment Agencies.

The Authority has power to refuse to grant or renew a licence to any person under the age of 21, or upon the ground that the applicant is an unsuitable person to hold such licence, or that the premises on which it is proposed to carry on the employment agency are unsuitable for the purpose, or that an employment agency has been or is being improperly conducted by an applicant.

The fees to be charged for licences are as follows:—

One guinea annually by agencies established for five years before the commencement of the Act, and two guineas by a newly established agency.

#### *By-laws as to Employment Agencies.*

(1) The Licensing Authority may make by-laws requiring persons holding licences to keep either books, cards, or forms, showing the business conducted by such persons so far as it relates to their employment agencies, and for prescribing entries to be made in connection

with such business in such books, cards, or forms, for the prevention of fraud and immorality in the conduct of agencies, and for regulating any premises used for the purposes of or in connection therewith.

Every person holding a licence shall keep exhibited in a suitable place in the premises a copy of the bye-laws made by the Licensing Authority.

Any officer duly authorised by the Licensing Authority on its behalf may at all reasonable times enter the premises specified in any licence . . . and inspect such premises and the entries required to be made in the books, cards, or forms kept by such persons. Any person who breaks these laws shall be liable to summary conviction in respect of any offence under paragraph (1) . . . to a penalty not exceeding fifty pounds, and to a daily penalty not exceeding twenty pounds, and to lesser fines, or, in lieu of a penalty, may have their licence revoked.

From this brief summary of the clauses of the Act it may be gathered that for the future all those responsible for supplying nurses will have to conform to an inquisitorial if useful Act, and it will be well for all those who intend to carry on such a business to obtain a copy of the Act and study carefully Part V., which refers to employment agencies.

We have no doubt when in working order the Act will be found useful, although no doubt it will be very unpopular with such persons as would have claimed exemption for charitable institutions. It will once and for all place Private Nursing Departments of hospitals on a firm business footing, as they should be, and remove them from the pseudo charitable atmosphere which has hitherto enveloped them.

It will be interesting to see who will act as agent of these businesses, the Chairman or Matron of the hospital. In our opinion the Committee should hold itself responsible for any business carried on for the financial benefit of the institution, the Chairman for the time being, and not a paid official, being the agent.

One other inevitable reflection results from perusing this Act. Here is a new law, financially and personally affecting thousands of women, quietly passed, concerning which they have never been consulted, nor indeed have they any power to influence its provisions, as they possess no vote, and thus do not exist politically!

This fact should bring home to Trained Nurses the imperative need of enfranchisement, and their duty as working women to insist upon their legal status as human beings.

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