

pupils for electrical work are also certificated masseuses. This work is quite distinct from the rubbing done in the wards, and for out-patients in the massage department. Up to 1897 two nurses were apparently sufficient for the massage required, and they were generally head nurses in the out-patient department. Now there are 36 certificate holders of the Incorporated Society of Trained Masseuses in the hospital, all of whom take cases, and a very large number on the private nursing staff.

So far this system works satisfactorily, but owing to the increasing clinical facilities for massage in medical and surgical work, and to the demand for a longer course of study for the pupil masseuse, it is being felt that it may shortly be necessary to increase the scope of the work and training and seek to attain the ideal mentioned earlier.

## The Nursing and Midwifery Conference.

TUESDAY, APRIL 4th.

### THE WORK OF INSPECTORS OF MIDWIVES.

We have already reported the proceedings of the Nursing and Midwifery Conference, held at the London County Council Technical Institute on the afternoon of Tuesday, April 4th. On the evening of that day the chair was taken by Dr. Elizabeth Macrory, President, and a paper read by Miss Wooldridge, a member, of the Association of Inspectors of Midwives, and Inspector for Staffordshire.

Miss Wooldridge said that when the Midwives' Act was passed in 1902 there were very few trained midwives working in the County of Staffordshire. In the first year inspection seemed to have very little effect, and the report of the Inspector for the county recorded that some midwives combined the avocation of pigkiller with that of midwife. One of these, when asked why she was killing a pig when a confinement was expected, replied that the "pig would have died any way."

In 1905 progress was shown by the fact that the notifications of sending for medical help had nearly doubled, while those of still birth remained the same. In 1905 there were 602 midwives in the county, 70 of whom were trained; in 1910, 409, 77 of whom held the C.M.B. certificate, or others, after examination. On April 1st, 1910, the Act came into full force, and from that date to the end of the year 21 women were prosecuted for practising as midwife without being certified by the Central Midwives' Board, and fined sums varying from 5s. to £5. One woman was fined twice, and, when asked why she incurred the second fine, replied "I'm working to pay off the other yet."

Miss Wooldridge said that the Inspectors' Association had been formed because of the great desire of Inspectors to enlarge their outlook, and in order that they might meet and discuss methods

of work, and for mutual benefit. In short, to widen their sympathies, add to their knowledge, and promote unity of action.

### DISCUSSION.

In the discussion which followed the Chairman emphasised the need for uniformity in methods of inspection. Mrs. Lawson, President of the National Association of Midwives, asked if it was the usual practice of inspectors to go through a midwife's house from the roof to the basement, and investigate her private drawers. The inspectors present denied that it was their practice.

Miss Elsie Hall said that as a practising midwife she found the inspectors a great stand by.

Mrs. Lawson said she spoke of things she knew, and referred to another inspector in Yorkshire who expected a midwife to take out sanitary papers and fly papers, in short to do the work of a Health Visitor, and because the midwife refused to do so she was a marked woman.

Miss Rosalind Paget, who remarked that the present was an excellent opportunity for discussing all points of view as members of the Central Midwives' Board, Inspectors, and practising midwives were present, said she would like to ask Mrs. Egerton's opinion as to whether inspectors gave evidence with consideration for midwives, or whether they were prejudiced. Personally, she knew of two cases in which the midwife was saved absolutely by the inspector.

The Hon. Mrs. Charles Egerton thought that many midwives were saved from being brought up before the Central Midwives' Board because of the advice given them by inspectors.

The suggestion was thrown out that midwives might make representations of their difficulties to the Inspectors' Association, and Mrs. Lawson inquired whether, if this were done, the Association would be willing to deal with erring members.

### CONCERT.

At 7.30 on the same evening a concert took place which was much appreciated by those present.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 5th.

### MENTAL NURSING.

Sir JAMES CRICHTON BROWNE, who presided at the Session on Mental Nursing, said that in his opinion the selection of asylum attendants and nurses should be in the hands of the medical officer, sound health, and a family history free from insanity and mental instability were indispensable, as there was no doubt that the asylum atmosphere was conducive to explosions in such cases. After that he confessed that, when he was a Medical Superintendent, good looks weighed with him even more than good testimonials, and to judge from the general comeliness of the nursing staffs of asylums at the present day, they still had their influence with Medical Superintendents. He advocated a year's training in a general hospital before entering an asylum, and the affiliation of general hospitals and asylums for training purposes. The scheme of training and examination of the Medico-Psychological Association were, however, admirable. In research work and clinics Germany was ahead of us, but in asylum nursing

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)