

The position of the certified midwife is that she is her own mistress, only bound by the rules of the Central Midwives' Board. She will not be compulsorily insured. A person employed under regulations (under the supervision of doctors) which may be of the nature of an agency, and who is subject to dismissal is probably employed.

The lecturer raised the question as to whether the work of nurses and midwives is "manual labour." He suggested that as skill enters largely into their work it cannot be so regarded.

Mrs. Bedford Fenwick enquired on whom the burden fell of paying the maternity benefit in the case of women with illegitimate children. Did the whole of this benefit come out of the women's funds? The lecturer admitted that it did. (Shame.) Mrs. Fenwick hoped that the meeting would take note of it.

Mrs. Fenwick also asked why the trained nurses of this country are the only class of women excluded from direct representation on the Advisory Committees, but received no satisfactory reply.

PSYCHOLOGY.

A paper on Psychology, what it is, and what it is not, was read for Mr. Stanley-Bligh by Mme. de Stael. Mr. Bligh defined psychology as "the science concerned with the human mind." A knowledge of psychology gives power, and with power you get responsibility.

SESSION II.

The most interesting Session of the Conference, and the most important, was the last, which included the subjects of State Registration of Trained Nurses and Woman Suffrage, dealt with by Miss Beatrice Kent, and Miss M. O. Haydon, Sister at the General Lying-in Hospital. The chair was taken by Miss E. S. Haldane, LL.D., who in outlining the programme of the evening, said no profession is satisfactory which limits itself directly to its own sphere. It should concern itself also with the topics of the day. The evening's programme was of an educational character. All nurses had technical education, but their education also went on throughout life—that which helped them to make the best of their lives and to do their work most thoroughly.

STATE REGISTRATION OF NURSES.

Miss Kent opened her paper by stating the objects to be attained by State Registration of Nurses: (1) A clear definition of the much-abused term Nurse, at present applied without any differentiation to the masquerader who pushes a perambulator, and to any woman trained and untrained who undertakes the responsibilities and duties of nursing the sick—it should be significant of a profession; (2) To afford a guarantee to the community of the professional skill of the nurses they employ; (3) To afford intelligent assistance to the medical profession; (4) To protect trained nurses from the unfair competition of untrained women. Miss Kent affirmed that nothing is good enough for the sick in nursing but the very

best, for the rich and poor alike. The only definition one can give of a nurse to-day is a woman in a bonnet and cloak. She referred to the many branches of social service in which nurses are now employed, and said that it was an anomalous position for the State to make use of trained nursing and yet to delay so long to give nurses legal status. The justice of this claim was supported by important medical and nursing organisations as well as by a Select Committee of the House of Commons. It only remained for the Government to give facilities for passing the measure into law.

Miss Kent reminded the audience that the movement had been initiated by Mrs. Bedford Fenwick twenty-five years ago. The main clause of Magna Charta which is said to be the basis of all subsequent legislation is this: "To none will we deny, to none will we delay, to none will we sell the right of justice." If this maxim were made the first and sacred law of our Parliament, needful reforms would be on the Statute Book very much sooner.

The Chairman at the conclusion of Miss Kent's paper said she was informed it was impossible to find anyone to present a paper against State Registration. She asked if any of those in the audience wished to put forward any arguments, and appealed to them to do so. No one responded until at last Miss Amy Hughes asked if she would be in order in mentioning objections which she did not at all believe in, but which she knew were put forward. They were the stock objections that it is impossible to register character, that women whose names were on the Register would be considered perfect, and that in the event of moral difficulties arising names could not be removed.

Another objection, voiced but not believed in, was that the hospital certificate should be sufficient without anything else.

Mrs. Bedford Fenwick said that hitherto the members of men's professions had almost exclusively been registered by the State. Medical women, with men, had been granted this privilege, also the midwives, and she was glad to know that women teachers were to have their registration council. The basis of the demand of nurses is that as a class, and an exceedingly useful class, they work for every member of the community. They are concerned with its members before the birth of the child, at the birth, during sickness, and at death. Nurses have established the precedent that they are willing to give three to four years of arduous work, including physical, mental, and moral energy to fit themselves for the care of the sick. She pointed out that it is due to trained and devoted Matrons a quarter of a century ago that this standard has been established, and that their work is now of such value that there is hardly a Government Department where their services are not employed and most patriotically given.

Mrs. Fenwick then reviewed the registration movement, touching on the tremendous struggle which had taken place during the last quarter of a century for just educational and economic

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