

period of five months. The fee for the five months is £29. In the event of a pupil monthly nurse leaving during or at the end of the preliminary month, £19 of the fee is returned to her.

The result of this training in the practical work in the wards is most successful; the nurses are a help there from the beginning, and instead of being afraid and overpowered when they enter, they are interested and keen, and do the work required in a methodical, business-like manner. Since the opening of the Preliminary Training School, two-thirds of the untrained applicants for midwifery training have entered the Training School, the majority of the remainder have had some other experience in nursing, &c., before coming to Queen Charlotte's Hospital. This, I think, has fully justified us in starting this new branch in our training of midwives.

What I should like to see, and the suggestion has been made before, is a Central School or College where a woman of fair education and intelligence could receive her preliminary training. It would save the hospitals much time and energy, and would simplify matters greatly; let it be in the hands of women whose professional reputation is known.

We have schools nowadays for hygiene, domestic economy, and cookery. Why not elementary anatomy and physiology, medical and surgical nursing, as far as could be taught apart from the hospital wards? And then, at the end of the course, the candidate could apply for training in nursing at any school she wished. She would have a much better idea of what hospital work meant, and the training would, I believe, save many a candidate who, at present, enters the nursing profession with erroneous ideas, and who soon becomes disheartened by the actual work, and gives it up in despair.

I am quite sure if some of the various schools or colleges would embark on this big enterprise they would find it an interesting venture, and one that I am sure would pay well if properly managed.

#### CENTRAL MIDWIVES BOARD.

The list of successful candidates at the April Examination of the Central Midwives Board has now been published, with the following results:—

Candidates Examined	...	292
Candidates Passed	...	231
Percentage of Failures	...	21

## THE MIDWIFERY CONFERENCE.

### A PLEA FOR LONGER TRAINING.

On the afternoon of Friday, April 25th, at which session Mrs. Stephen Glanville presided, papers were presented by Miss Blomfield, Matron of Queen Charlotte's Hospital, on "Preliminary Training Schools for Midwives," which we print in full, and by Mr. Douglas Knocker, a medical man and barrister-at-law, on "The Law Relating to the Qualifications, Rights and Duties of the Midwife."

Mrs. Parnell, Matron of the Woolwich Home for Mothers and Babies, gave an address pleading for longer training, enumerating in support of her contention the instruction necessary. Thus Eyes, Normal and Abnormal, needed at least two lectures; Specific Disease, three lectures; Sanitation, Babies, Health Visitors; and three lectures might well be devoted to Artificial Foods.

The theoretical course should last six months in addition to the practical work. The training should begin in hospital. What a great gain it would be for those who come after us if the time in which to reach the required standard could be lengthened.

The speaker referred to the loss of experience of booking patients—a most useful acquirement—owing to the short training. The art of taking measurements, of estimating the probability of a normal or difficult labour, the recognition of a transverse presentation, and the possibility of rectifying it by external version all required time.

### THE LAW RELATING TO THE QUALIFICATIONS,

#### RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF THE MIDWIFE.

Mr. Douglas Knocker said it would be amusing, were it less tragic, to trace in the history of the practice and profession of midwifery in England the manifestations of those characteristics of conservatism and inertia which centuries of insularity are said to have bequeathed us.

At length, a paternal but heavy-moving legislature (in response to a press and platform agitation) communed within itself, and in 1902 produced an Act "to secure the better training of midwives and to regulate their practice." This Act, known as the Midwives Act, 1902, the "Magna Charta" of the midwife, since it introduced entirely new regulations, and set up entirely new machinery to secure their performance, deserved very special consideration. Mr. Knocker then discussed the Act in detail.

#### LIABILITY AND DUTY.

Under this heading the speaker discussed the duties and liabilities of a midwife from the point of view of legal responsibility. The question fell into two parts, for while their responsibilities were generally defined by the general law, the Midwives Act itself had imposed an additional one.

The midwife was under a double responsibility. First she was in the position of one of two parties to a simple contract. Her duty was to give due

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