work. We understood from the matron that it was part of of her duties to bathe and attend to the female vagrants; we cannot commend this arrangement; it must place the nurse in contact with disease and infection—a danger no monthly nurse should run.

THE WORKHOUSE INFIRMARY

would practically receive all the destitute sick of the district, as there is no hospital nearer than Exeter, but there are not many who avail themselves of the aid offered, and the medical officer informed us that it was a rare thing to nurse an acute case in the infirmary.

RECOMMENDATIONS.

We cannot in common honesty recommend anything less drastic than the building of a new workhouse; a comparatively small outlay in smoothing and colouring the walls, in providing armchairs for the patients, curing the smoky chimney, building isolation wards, and improving the children's quarters, would make the place far more satisfactory. Yet when we consider that both the laundry and kitchen are inadequate to the work of the house, that the house is a very old one, and that the situation is wholly bad, we cannot but think that the construction of a new workhouse, with separate quarters for the sick, would be far the better plan, and also more economical in the long run. The population of the district is increasing, and there is likely to be a greater demand for accommodation in the house in a few years' time.

THE REGISTRATION OF MIDWIVES.

THE following report was submitted to the Edinburgh Branch of the British Medical Association at a meeting held in the Royal College of Physicians on January 14th:

Your Committee report their disapproval of the principle of the registration of midwives.

They consider that no woman is competent to attend on her own responsibility even so-called normal labours unless legally registered to practise under the Medical Act, because sudden complications may arise under the apparently most normal conditions where impromptu and active treatment, which such women are not qualified to undertake, is demanded; and further, because the diagnosis of complications must be, in a number of instances, beyond their power, and thus delay in sending for assistance is caused which is in many cases most vital.

And if thus incompetent legal registration would lay on the medical profession, who would be the teachers and examiners, the onus of the dangers and evils which might arise. And your Committee are further of opinion that legal registration would open the door to serious abuses in the treatment of infants and of the diseases peculiar to women.

But, while deprecating any proposals in the direction of founding a new order of registered midwives, your Committee are of opinion that something may be done to improve the present state of matters.

Recognising as they do that a large number of women will still be attended by unqualified women only, they suggest that, in order to minimise the evils, the training of midwifery nurses should be improved.

They suggest that the power of granting certificates to midwifery nurses should be restricted to those institutions which have sufficient facilities for imparting both theoretical and practical instruction, and that certificates should only be granted after examination by some competent examiner not on the staff of the institution in question.

Your Committee would consider it very desirable that all midwifery nurses should be under the supervision of some qualified medical practitioner.

Signed on behalf of the Committee,

JAMES RITCHIE, *Chairman.*

NORMAN WALKER, *Convener.*

PROFESSOR HEUBNER has been promoted from the Extraordinary to the Ordinary Professorship of Children's Diseases in the University of Berlin. This is the first time the rank of Ordinary Professor has been accorded to any one in Germany in connection with this specialty.

LITERARY NOTES.

A MOVEMENT is on foot to present a testimonial to Dr. John S. Billings on the occasion of the completion of the Index Catalogue of the Library of the Surgeon-General's Office, United States Army.

During the fiscal year ended June 30th, 1894, there were added to the Library of the Surgeon-General's Office 1,082 medical journals, 214 volumes of *Transactions*, 346 bound pamphlets, 2,272 medical books of other kinds, 2,258 medical theses, and 9,053 medical pamphlets. At the close of the year the Library contained 33,297 medical journals, 4,913 volumes of *Transactions*, 1,663 bound theses, 2,604 bound pamphlets, 72,090 medical books of other kinds, 52,218 medical theses, and 127,560 pamphlets, a grand total of 183,778.

The first number of *Clinical Sketches*, the new monthly periodical, edited by Mr. Noble Smith, contains papers by Mr. Henry Morris, Dr. John Phillips, Mr. Anderson Critchett and others, with abstracts, reviews, notes of new inventions, etc. There is a department of veterinary surgery, and a "Nurses' Column" under the charge of Miss Honnor Morten. A special feature is to be made of illustrations, and the editor proposes "to introduce a full-sized plate of some medical celebrity, or other subject of interest, in each issue." In the present number an engraving of the portrait of Harvey in the Royal College of Physicians is given. *Clinical Sketches* is well printed, and presents a creditable appearance.

According to an American contemporary, Dr. Conan Doyle, in the course of his recent tour in the United States, visited the grave of Oliver Wendell Holmes, and, in the name of the London Society of Authors, placed on it a number of palms tied with purple ribbon, and ornamented with large bunches of English violets, bride roses, and asparagus vines. On a card attached to the flowers were the following words: "From the Society of Authors (London). A token of reverence and of love. A. Conan Doyle."

Dr. Viquerat, whose treatment of tuberculosis with ass's serum was referred to in the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL not long ago, evidently takes himself and his discovery very seriously. He has founded an "institute," which bears his own name, at Côte-Drize, near Geneva. Here he prepares his serum and treats patients, and the results will no doubt be published in due course in a monthly journal, which he modestly calls *Annales de l'Institut Viquerat*. In this periodical full details are given as to the price of the remedy and the tariff of fees for treatment; but the information vouchsafed as to the method of preparing the remedy is somewhat meagre. We are assured, however, that the discovery "will snatch from an untimely death thousands and thousands of men," but Dr. Viquerat's philanthropic ambition is apparently not yet satisfied, for we are told that "the numerous animals" which he has at his disposal will enable him to continue his researches. We are assured that the *âne de Viquerat* is destined to be as famous in the history of medicine as the *asinus Buridani* used to be in the schools. In view of regrettable possibilities of confusion, would it not be well for the sake of posterity to make it quite clear that the term is applied solely to the patient quadruped from which the serum is obtained?

We hail with pleasure the resurrection of Mr. Hutchinson's valuable *Archives of Surgery*, which appears in the same form as before, though enlarged and bearing the imprint of a new publisher. It contains a large amount of interesting original matter from the pen of Mr. Hutchinson himself, and is well illustrated. An article of special interest at the present time is "A Plea for Clinical Research," in which Mr. Hutchinson protests against the threatened displacement of clinical observation by instrumental methods of research, and "the feeling of distrust, almost of contempt, for conclusions based merely on circumstantial evidence, which is at present prevalent." With regard to diphtheria he says:

The discovery of Loeffler's bacillus has perhaps added definiteness to our knowledge, and may be thought to have strengthened the hands of contagionists. Clinical observers had, however, fully anticipated it, and it may be asserted that the creed which they had suggested was in some important aspects a much sounder and safer one than that which is now becoming prevalent. Practical men, eager to repose on what they count scientific demonstration (that is, something seen only by the aid of a microscope), now search painfully for the bacillus, or send up a piece of membrane to London, and receive by telegram a diagnosis from which