

medical or nursing staff to represent its views and wishes; upon which the Association, as comprising one-fifth of the number of Nurses now estimated to be at work, might be represented by the members of its Executive Committee; and to which other members might be specially added. That this body should meet once or twice a year, should decide upon all necessary rules and regulations, and be, in short, the governing body of the scheme.

(b.) That the Council should from its members appoint a Registration Board of about twenty-four persons, to meet as often as requisite, to supervise the details of the work, and be, in short, the executive body of the scheme.

(c.) That separate and distinct Registers for Midwives, and for Nurses should be forthwith opened and continued.

(d.) That for a limited "period of grace," any person who could produce proof, satisfactory to the Board, that she had been engaged for three years, for payment, in attendance in labour, or upon the sick, and also of moral character, might be Registered; but that thereafter only those who held a Certificate from an Obstetrical Examining body, or a recognised Hospital, or could produce other proof satisfactory to the Registration Board of their technical knowledge and efficiency, and of their moral character, should be enrolled upon the Register. Furthermore, that the Board should—subject to a right of appeal to the Registration Council—have the absolute power to remove temporarily, or permanently, from the Registers, the name, with the qualification, of any Midwife or Nurse who may show herself to be unworthy of trust.

5. The cardinal principle for which the British Nurses' Association has striven, in the face of enormous opposition, is that the control of Midwives and Nurses should remain in the hands of the medical and nursing professions, and that this question of Registration should be dealt with solely by professional authorities.

6. The Association, therefore, submits this scheme to the General Medical Council, and respectfully seeks the advice, support and assistance of that influential body in the matter. It would venture especially to ask whether it would be advisable that a certain number of representative medical men, Obstetric Physicians, and Midwives, should be requested to act as members of the Registration Council, and *ex officio* of the Board. And, if so, whether in the opinion of the General

Medical Council it would be better that these members should be elected by the Registration Council, or that they should be appointed by some outside authority. Finally, if the latter course be considered the more advisable, would the General Medical Council be willing to undertake the duty of nominating such representatives, as such action upon its part would be gratefully accepted.

BEDFORD FENWICK, M.D., *Hon. Secretary.*
CATHERINE J. WOOD, *Secretary.*

SCIENTIFIC (?) ATAVISM.

WHENEVER anything peculiarly grotesque or un-savoury is propounded by a modern light, it may be pretty safely assumed that atavism is at the root of its being. When Professor Brown Séquard glamourised the minds of some of his fellow creatures with his "discovery" of an elixir that was to rejuvenate senile humanity, he was probably recurring to a long-forgotten type of ancestor of Chinese birth. For more than twenty centuries, *Pents' ao*, or Chinese Pharmacopœia, has contained many remedies obtained from the organs, secretions, and excretions of the human body; and long before the Master of mankind was giving the blind their sight in the streets and lanes of Galilee, the Chinese Esculapius was prescribing human saliva as a cure for ophthalmia, and human liver, *eaten raw*, as a prophylactic for dyspepsia. In the sixteenth century the learned Dr. Li-chi-chin revised and re-edited the ancient pharmacopœia above mentioned, bringing it up to date (!). To be sure, the qualified and more advanced Chinese doctors only go so far as to prescribe those parts and secretions of the body as can be obtained without hurting or harming the person who gives them, such as hair, burnt nails, saliva, fermented wine, etc.; but the Celestials abound in quacks and charlatans, and these are as fond of heroic remedies as some of their brethren nearer home; and it is not an uncommon thing for the Knight of the Pigtail and Pestle to order for a patient in desperate plight, the blood, heart, liver, spleen, or other organs of a freshly killed *child*. Now and again in the *Pekin Gazette* there are accounts of government rewards to some brave child for filial heroism in giving up a piece of flesh from some part of its body for healing disease in a parent. But it is not in China alone that so drastic and empiric a style of treatment is adopted. Recently, in Japan, a case has created a considerable sensation where a wife has been sacrificed to provide human-liver for her husband's mother. The poor victim had implored to be slain instead of her child, who had been doomed to supply the dreadful remedy! Verily, the history of sickness and its cure is a strange and awful one, and along the track of dark and fateful blundering, superstition, struggle, and pathos, the finger of eternal wisdom seems to write the momentous truth that "what is morally wrong can never be medically right."

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