



Letters to the Editor.

NOTES, QUERIES, &c.

Whilst cordially inviting communications upon all subjects for these columns, we wish it to be distinctly understood that we do not in any way hold ourselves responsible for the opinions expressed by our correspondents.

THE CENTRAL MIDWIVES BOARD.

To the Editor of the "British Journal of Nursing."

DEAR MADAM,—During and since the passage of the Midwives' Bill a good deal has been stated, both verbally and in the Press, to the effect that the friends of trained midwives have not sufficiently insisted that there should be at least one midwife on the Central Midwives Board. We know of no friend of the trained midwife in this matter except the Midwives' Institute, and those who, like myself, have worked at this question for the last twelve years can alone realise how powerful the opposition has been against the nomination of even one medical practitioner by the Midwives' Institute. Though constantly threatened by members of Parliament and by powerful medical organisations that if we persevered in our demand for even this minimum of representation the Bill would be wrecked, we took a firm stand on the important principle that a class legislated for should have some representation, with the result that now for several years this very small claim has been conceded—it should be added, conceded owing to the recognition of the justice of the claim, and not because at the eleventh hour the influence of important personages and Parliamentary obstructive tactics were brought to bear on the question. The final effort to displace our representation came on the second reading in the House of Commons from the Royal British Nurses' Association, an entirely unexpected quarter.

Those of our critics who consider that the interests of the trained midwife have not been sufficiently studied should now use their influence to ensure that those bodies that have the power, viz., the Queen Victoria's Jubilee Institute and the Royal British Nurses' Association, should appoint fully-trained and certificated midwives as their nominees. It may be noted that there is a possibility of four midwives being nominated on the Central Board, though the fact remains, and it is due to the tactics of the opposition mentioned before, that not one of these can be nominated by the Midwives' Institute.

I am, dear Madam, Yours faithfully,

J. WILSON,

President Incorporated Midwives' Institute.
12, Buckingham Street, W.C.

A SUMMER CAMP FOR NURSES.

To the Editor of the "British Journal of Nursing."

DEAR MADAM,—A summer camp on very simple lines for nerve-tired women will be held during August and September in a quiet country village near the yachting town of Burnham-on-Crouch.

It will be under the general supervision of a nurse, and nurses will be welcomed.

It is hoped that arrangements will be possible for

sketching, riding parties, cycling, photographing, music, yachting, bathing, &c.

For all particulars, application should be made to Miss Goodyer, The Hut, Latchingdon, Maldon, Essex.
H. L. GREGORY BROWNE.

FLOATING HOSPITALS.

To the Editor of the "British Journal of Nursing."

DEAR MADAM,—The floating hospital movement in the States is a splendid success, and its history in connection with New York City is instructive. The restorative value of sea air for sickly children and mothers was realised by quite a number of good people in that city, who met together and evolved the idea of a floating hospital.

This idea was warmly taken up a well-known lady named Miss Emma Abbott, and out of her own generosity she provided money to purchase a steamship and equip it as a floating hospital.

The St. John's Guild was formed, and followed up the work most enthusiastically, with the result that several committees were elected to undertake the various kinds of work demanded in carrying out the scheme successfully.

Thus one committee sees after the funds, another takes charge of the medical and nursing arrangements, another controls the officers and crew, still another provides music and entertainment on board, and a general committee look after the whole policy of the guild.

Thousands of mothers have had cause to be thankful for the hospital ship, and what it has done for their little children. The work is known to all the poorest in the tenement houses of New York, for during its existence no fewer than a million mothers and children have received medical and other help. During the summer months the hospital ship takes at least one trip a day, stopping at the piers both at New York and Brooklyn to take on suffering passengers. The plan of operation is as follows:—When a mother finds her little one languishing or in bad health she takes it down to the landing stage where the hospital ship is moored, and waits to see the doctor, and, after examination to ascertain the nature of the ailment, the mother and child are admitted to the enclosure at one part of the wharf, and presently assisted on board.

Sitting on deck, the passengers have nothing to do but rest and inhale the invigorating sea breezes, and let Nature do her restorative work. Kind doctors and nurses are close at hand ready to render medical and surgical aid in cases that demand it, and nourishing meals are served at long tables in the dining saloon.

After a pleasant voyage of twenty miles the passengers land at New Dorp, where, upon the sandy beach, a permanent hospital has been built. Here the tiny ones can stop for the day, or longer, until restored completely to health, both mother and child spending many hours of the time resting and playing on the beach.

For an island people it strikes me that you make very little use of your splendid shores for the benefit of the very poor in great cities; of course, all well-to-do people sniff the briny during their annual holiday, but the slum children and poor country children never see the sea from year's end to year's end. Why not? It is not very far away from the most inland spot as we Americans count distance.—Yours cordially,

AN AMERICAN NURSE IN LONDON.

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