

smattering of knowledge to the untrained. May I venture to suggest that he should release the 280 nurses on the Private Nursing Staff of the hospital, for military service. These nurses would completely staff three Territorial Hospitals of 500 beds each.—Yours truly,

SISTER, TERRITORIAL HOSPITAL.

[An excellent suggestion.—ED.]

"EVERY CHILD OUGHT TO BE A LOVE CHILD."

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—In the discussion raised by the tragic maternity now in our midst, one point appears to have been entirely overlooked. Those who have made an extensive study of the subject assert that when the inception of a new life is the outcome of violence, hate, lust or drunkenness, the child is denied a harmonious nature and—as character and destiny are interchangeable terms—a favourable destiny also. Personally, so far as my investigations have carried me, I have found this to be true. The child who is begotten as the result of a reconciliation between the parents after a violent quarrel is common amongst us. So is the offspring generated in a drunken bout on the part of either parent or both. In physique, in character, more especially in its nervous system, such a child carries the penalty of the parents' sin throughout its life. An environment from birth as nearly ideal as can be secured may do much to modify this penalty; but the fact remains that the child has been defrauded of its birthright and no subsequent love and care can restore this.

"Every child ought to be a love child," said a great man to me once. Those who live or work amongst the lower classes have ample opportunity for observing the superiority of the true love child. It almost always has a sunny, loveable nature, and, unless the mother has suffered anguish and starvation before its birth, a sound constitution also.

One eminent divine has recently stated, "Every atom of the body of a child is formed from the mother's body only." This is a dangerous partial truth. The complicated and elusive laws of heredity frequently impose on the offspring of a pure and sound mother an almost exact reproduction of the physical body of a degraded father.

To create a wholly satisfactory child, the emotional, spiritual and physical state of the parents should at the moment of its inception be the highest to which they can attain. Owing to ignorance, selfishness and a false sense of shame the vast majority of children are begotten in the worst conditions. And so evolution is hindered, and we pour out gold, time and human energy like water in continuous tinkering at these children defrauded of their birthright, instead of tracking the evils to their source, and putting matters right there.

Midwives and maternity nurses have wide scope for influence on this point. After all, it is

true that more evil is wrought by want of thought than want of heart. Sheer, crass ignorance is the biggest stumbling block we have to demolish.

The coming children of the Huns will offer a magnificent field for experiment to those who maintain that environment is stronger than heredity. It is to be hoped that eugenists with ample means will avail themselves of this opportunity in the interests of the science of eugenics, and at the same time alleviate the tragic sorrows of hundreds of mothers and their little ones.—I am, Dear Madam,

Yours faithfully,

A STUDENT OF CAUSATION.

OPPOSED TO CATHOLIC TEACHING.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

MADAM,—I have just read in THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING of the 20th ult., the article entitled "The Maternal Instinct." I see that the writer quotes a sermon said to have been preached in Flanders by an aged priest, and it occurs to me that the following paragraph in *The Tablet* of March 13th may prove interesting to your readers in this connection.

"Mgr. Wachter and an Alleged Sermon." The Westminster Catholic Federation has received the following letter from Mgr. de Wachter, Bishop Auxiliary of Malines, concerning the report of a sermon preached by an unnamed Belgian priest:—"My attention has recently been called by the Westminster Catholic Federation to a sermon alleged to have been preached by a Belgian priest, advocating a certain course of conduct to Belgian women who had been the victims of German excesses of a terrible type. I beg to state that this story is entirely an invention, and as all Catholics know, is entirely opposed to Catholic teaching."—Yours, &c.,

M. A. MAGRUDER.

Edinchip, Balquhiddy, R.S.O.

OUR PRIZE COMPETITIONS.

April 3rd.—Why is the Care of the Teeth important?

April 10th.—Describe the various digestive juices and their action.

April 17th.—Describe the condition of urine in Cystitis, Bright's Disease, Hydro-nephrosis, Rheumatism, and Diabetes.

NOTICE.

Candidates for the French Flag Nursing Corps from the country can be interviewed by arrangement with Lady Barclay, 60, Nevcrn Square, London, S.W. Mrs. Bedford Fenwick will be at 431, Oxford Street, W., on Monday, 29th, from 2.30 to 5 p.m., to interview candidates. Candidates must be well educated and hold a three years' certificate of training. Fever experience is a great advantage. Nurses speaking French are preferred.

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