

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

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.

RECEIVING COMMITTEE FOR COMFORTS FOR THE GREEK FIGHTING FORCES.

34, Hyde Park Square,
London, W.2.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—We notice that you have very kindly inserted the appeal that appeared in *The Times* in your Nursing Journal. You did this once before, and we had a number of responses, and the knitters are still working for us. We are most grateful for your kind help in this matter. We enclose a pamphlet which was printed over a year ago which may interest you and will give you an idea of some of the work that has been done by this depot.

Yours faithfully,

MRS. M. CONSTANTINIDI,
Hon. Secretary.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—It is significant to read in the *Daily Telegraph* of the miners' grievances as to the unjust terms to be meted out to them, stated by Mr. Arthur Horner, President, South Wales Miners Federation:—

"It means that 'Bevin boys' over 21 can come into the industry fresh and earn as much as a repairer, the most skilled man underground, who has had to buy expensive tools and who has, perhaps, had 30 years' experience doing his most difficult work."

It is just such an injustice that Registered Nurses suffer from in the passing of the Nurses Act, 1943, by which legislation, semi-trained assistant nurses can compete with State Registered Nurses of three, four and five years' training!

Although we have no sympathy with strikes we do warmly sympathise with the miners' grievances, and had the majority of Registered Nurses at home, protested against the Nurses Bill, 1943, the Registered Nurse would not have been de-graded, which condition, as time goes on, will be more and more bitterly realised by her.

A. S. B.

[We deeply regret the miners' action to strike in time of war, and thus endanger the lives of the men and women fighting for our safety and salvation.

After war ceases let the miners compel Mr. Ernest Bevin, M.P., Minister of Labour, if still in office, to cease his autocratic and intolerable system of compulsion. We hope Registered Nurses will take like action.—Ed.]

TO OUR READERS.

We apologise for the delay in the issue of this month's Journal, but the important information in the Editorial was not released by the Ministry of Information until March 18th.

THE "BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING" AND THE "MIDWIFE" SUPPLEMENT, FOUNDED 1888, is the Official Organ of the National Council of Nurses of Great Britain. Price 7s. annually, including postage. Apply, MANAGER, 19, Queen's Gate, London, S.W.7.

THE MIDWIFE.

BIRTHS STILL RISE: HIGHEST TOTAL FOR 17 YEARS. BIG FALL IN MARRIAGES.

A total of 169,348 live births registered during the September quarter of last year was the highest for that period since 1926. Representing a birth rate of 16.2 per 1,000, it was the highest third quarter rate since 1930.

The Registrar-General's Return of Births, Deaths and Marriages for the three months ended September 30, 1943, also reports that the infant mortality rate—40 per 1,000 related live births—was the lowest quarterly rate ever recorded.

During the first nine months of 1943, 521,858 live births were registered, compared with 494,171 in the same period of 1942.

Of the births registered during the September quarter, 87,525 were boys and 81,823 girls, a proportion of 1,070 boys to 1,000 girls. The average for the 10 preceding third quarters was 1,053. There was a substantial fall in the number of marriages. A total of 81,454 was the lowest for any September quarter since 1918, while the rate, 15.6 persons married per 1,000 population, was the lowest for this period since 1917.

There were 14,259 fewer marriages than in the corresponding three months of 1942. Compared with the average number during this quarter over the five years 1937-1941, there was a reduction of 43,973.

Deaths numbered 98,509, representing a death rate of 9.4 per 1,000, compared with 9.3 for the same quarter of 1942.


ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE WELFARE OF MOTHERS AND YOUNG CHILDREN.

Urging the proper feeding of mothers, the Committee declare that it is of first importance infants should be breast-fed. "Human milk is of special importance to the premature infant," they state, "but there is no organised breast-milk service in Scotland." The incidence of underfeeding and of malnutrition is stated to be high in bottle-fed babies.

Dealing with medical services, the Committee declare that Scotland has lagged behind in the provision of maternity and child welfare services. The Committee add that health visitors have usually much larger districts than they can efficiently manage, and that the Local Authorities do not sufficiently use the powers they have to supply extra food and domestic help. It is stated that the training of doctors, midwives, and maternity nurses in obstetrics and infant care is inadequate because adequate rules for the purpose laid down by the General Medical Council and the Central Midwives Boards are not complied with.

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