



## 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 MIDWIVES' BOARD.

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

DEAR MADAM,—With you, I am very glad to see that, in the formation of the Midwives' Board, the work of those midwives who have been foremost in promoting registration has been recognised. It is very disheartening when those who have worked hard in any cause are at the eleventh hour jostled out of the front rank by persons who have carefully avoided touching a question while it is in the controversial stage. One was afraid at one time that this would happen in connection with the Midwives' Board, owing to the most unjustifiable attempt of the Royal British Nurses' Association on the second reading of the Midwives' Bill in the House of Commons, to oust the representative of the Midwives' Institute in favour of its own candidate. There is, therefore, special cause for congratulation that this attempt did not succeed.

The constitution of the Midwives' Board is much better than one had reason to expect, for two reasons. In the first place, while no provision is made that any midwives *must* have seats on the Midwives' Board, which has always appeared to me a fundamental flaw in the Bill, in forming it three midwives have been appointed, so that the interests of the class governed will be represented on the governing body, and a precedent has been created as to the appointment of midwives on the Board.

In the second place it is a hopeful sign that the Lord President of the Privy Council has appreciated the necessity for appointing a woman who is a midwife. The idea is so prevalent that a woman who has borne children knows all there is to know of midwifery, while the trained and experienced single woman knows nothing, that one's fears as to the qualifications of the woman to be appointed in this case were reasonable.

It is obvious if the "married-woman theory" can hold water that men must be put out of court altogether in obstetric work, however high their qualifications may be, a theory which would find few exponents. When one remembers also that the married woman in these days is usually more or less under chloroform during the act of child-bearing, it is reasonable to assume that her scientific knowledge of the process is not so exhaustive as to qualify her to sit as an expert on a Board which governs a body of professional women. On all these counts, therefore, let us be thankful for our mercies.

I am, dear Madam,

Yours faithfully,

A MIDWIFE.

"LO, WE TURN TO THE GENTILES."

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

DEAR MADAM,—I am glad to observe that a correspondent in your valuable journal has drawn attention

to the necessity and the wisdom of educating the public as to the question of State Registration of Trained Nurses. The public are profoundly ignorant at present as to the issues involved, but once let them realise the significance of the movement and they will demand registration, with the power at their back to enforce it—the power of the vote. Just a word of warning to nurses. When that time comes, it is not the interests of the nurses but their own that the public will seek to safeguard. The nurses must look after themselves or go to the wall. Have they the courage? One is inclined to doubt it.

Faithfully yours,

A GENTILE.

#### THE BELATED ROLL OF THE R.B.N.A.

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

DEAR MADAM,—I quite agree with much of your criticism of the Roll of the R.B.N.A. It is very faulty, and appears to be controlled and edited by persons who know very little of what goes on in the Nursing World. It is plain to see that the Registrar is quite ignorant of and has no interest in current nursing events. If she read the BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING, and the official journals of the various Nurses' Leagues, a great number of the inexcusable mis-statements could not have appeared in the Roll. Moreover, the Committee work under the legal status of a Royal Charter, surely the careless compilation of the Roll—for which they are primarily responsible—might be brought to the notice of the Privy Council, or some other authority which has the power to insist upon the work being properly done. The issue of a Roll for 1902 in November is proof positive of neglect of duty and mismanagement, and the insertion of persons who are dead carelessly cruel. Your list of nurses who have married during the last five years and changed their addresses who still appear in the Roll under their maiden names, might be extended *ad infinitum*, and these names are not marked "uncommunicated," as they should be, for "uncommunicated" they have been for years. This very faulty Roll would be convincing evidence before any Parliamentary inquiry into nursing matters of the necessity for State Registration of Nurses and the issue of a correct Register under the authority of a Board with some sense of responsibility to the nursing profession and the public. The present officials have proved themselves over and over again quite incapable of organising or controlling the nursing profession. I should be for annotating all the false entries which appear in the current Roll of the R.B.N.A. and making them public, to prove our contention that a profession should be self-governing if it is to attain to any degree of efficiency and public respect, and if its affairs are to be conducted in a business-like manner.

Yours truly,

CALEDONIA.

P.S.—By the bye, where is the "Kuchill" Hospital, Glasgow? We in Scotland do not know it.

#### OBJECTIONABLE ADVERTISEMENTS.

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

DEAR MADAM,—In your issue of last week you drew attention to the disrepute brought upon the nursing profession by the frequent cases in the police-courts in which women are concerned who pose as nurses. It seems to me very discreditable that Miss Gale, who is charged with abandoning babies, should

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