



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.

OUR GUINEA PRIZE.

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

DEAR MADAM,—Many thanks for cheque received to-day. I was indeed very pleased and surprised to be the winner of same.—Again thanking you, Yours sincerely,

M. STEVENS.

The Institution, Sutton Coldfield.

THE PROPER PLACE OF WOMAN.

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

DEAR MADAM,—I notice in your last issue that a scientist is of opinion that "when men make it possible for women to return to their proper place of home and motherhood, and they can cease the pitiful struggle for existence, leaving the obtaining of a livelihood to the men of the family, that the conditions that produce insanity will diminish."

Presumably, therefore, the scientist referred to considers that every woman should marry a man who is able to support her. Statistics, however, will easily prove that as the number of marriageable women is considerably in excess of the number of marriageable men, this suggestion for the support of women is a manifest impossibility, unless it implies a return to polygamy. Further, it is not every married woman whose husband supports her; on the contrary, many wives support their husbands to a considerable extent, and keep the home together under difficulties which always beset the married woman, and considerably increase the mental strain consequent upon her wage-earning endeavours. Another point is, that it is uncommon for the span of life allotted to man and wife to terminate simultaneously, and, therefore, unless a man has been able to invest sufficient capital to enable him to provide comfortably for his widow, which is not a very common occurrence, she must "turn to" or become dependent upon relations—not an attractive position to a self-respecting woman. But, in middle life, it is almost impossible for a woman to enter upon a lucrative employment; therefore, in their youth, in my view, all able-bodied women who are not, so far as human foresight can judge, placed beyond possibility of want, should learn to support themselves by means of a profession or trade to which they can always turn should necessity arise. The delicate and physically unfit will still form an outlet for the generosity of their male relations.

That is one side of the question. Another is this. It is argued that hard work has a tendency to produce insanity in women; but a far more frequent cause, in my opinion, is *want* of work. Think of all the spinsters dependent on uncongenial relations, with a roof over their heads, and food to eat, it is true, but with the barest pocket money and dress allowance,

with no real place in the body politic, their legitimate aspirations thwarted, and an unhealthy amount of introspection almost inevitable in the time which hangs heavy on their hands. How they wither up! No, if we *must* become insane, let us do so (which personally I doubt) as the effect of hard work, not driven thereto by the "dire compulsion of infertile days."

Yours faithfully,

A SELF-SUPPORTING WOMAN OF FORTY.

Comments and Replies.

Midwife, Bridgwater.—Up to March 31st next women can be certified under the Midwives' Act, without passing any further examination, (1) who hold certificates from certain institutions and examining bodies, including the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland, the Obstetrical Society of London, and the Rotunda Hospital, Dublin, or such other certificate as may be approved by the Central Midwives' Board; (2) who produce evidence, satisfactory to the Board, that at the passing of this Act they have been for at least one year in *bond-fide* practice as a midwife, and bear a good character. If you apply to the Secretary, Central Midwives' Board, 6, Suffolk Street, Pall Mall, S.W., at once there is little doubt that you would be eligible to register without passing any further examination. We believe the last examination of the London Obstetrical Society has been held. You should certainly register if you wish to continue work as a midwife, if only occasionally, otherwise after 1910 you will not be able to do so.

Certificated Nurse.—You would be very ill-advised to go to South Africa in the expectation of getting work. You should have a definite post secured to you on a written agreement before starting, otherwise you may find yourself in very embarrassing circumstances. Work is by no means plentiful for nurses in South Africa at present.

Notices.

THE SOCIETY FOR STATE REGISTRATION OF TRAINED NURSES.

All those desirous of helping on the important movement of this Society to obtain a Bill providing for the legal registration of trained nurses will find an application form on page vii., or can obtain all information concerning the Society and its work from the Secretary, 431, Oxford Street, London, W.

Those nurses who are working on behalf of the above Society, and are endeavouring to spread knowledge as to its aims, may be glad to know that they can now obtain a Memorandum giving briefly the reasons why Registration is necessary, from the Hon. Secretary, 431, Oxford Street, London, W. Price 6d. for 20 copies.

Those interested in the efficient organisation of nursing should procure the Annual Report of the Society for the State Registration of Trained Nurses from the Hon. Secretary, 431, Oxford Street, London, W. Six copies, post free, 7d., or one copy 1½d. Gives brief review of the history of State Registration of Nurses.

OUR PRIZE PUZZLE.

Rules for competing for the Pictorial Puzzle Prize will be found on Advertisement page viii.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)