

a maternity charity which received about 150 in-patients, and attended between 700 and 800 out-patients, in the course of the year, the undefined position I held in the eyes of the law gave me considerable cause for reflection. So much so, that after two years' experience of the work I wrote to the authorities (there being at that time no likelihood of the Registration of midwives in the near future) to say that I could only continue to hold such a post by qualifying as a medical practitioner. For the position in which I found myself was this: that in the eyes of the law my capacity to practise midwifery was neither recognised nor protected, and in the event of any untoward circumstance arising my course of action would not be investigated by a professional body by which I should be regarded as, and receive that consideration accorded to a skilled worker. In the eyes of the law, midwives having no legal status, I should rank merely as a common criminal.

The midwives of the present day who are entitled by law to practise midwifery, whose work is placed on a well-defined basis by a Central Board to which they are responsible, can scarcely realise the anxieties of a midwife in the past, whose work was most onerous, while her position was *nil*. I should like to draw the attention of nurses to the following facts. It took me three years' work and two stiff examinations to gain a certificate in general nursing, and only as many months to obtain the diploma of the London Obstetrical Society stating that I was a skilled midwife and competent to attend natural labour. Yet no one may take the name or title of midwife or imply that she is specially qualified to practise midwifery. I am "entitled by law to practise midwifery" as the result of three months work and study. But my certificate as a trained nurse has no legal value. Anybody may take the name or title of trained nurse and imply that she is specially qualified to act as such. Is this reasonable or just?

No wonder hospitals are beginning to find difficulty in procuring well-educated intelligent probationers, and are having to lower their standard. Let Hospital Committees unite to help their nurses to obtain Registration and protection when trained, there will then be no dearth of first-class women to fill probationers' vacancies.

Yours truly,
COMMON SENSE.

Comments and Replies.

Isolation.—The necessity for co-operation is a lesson which nurses are slow to learn, but it is absolutely necessary that they should learn it before they can effectively voice their views. "To be a whole is to be poor and mean, to be a part is to be great and mighty."

Midwife.—Messrs. Allen and Hanburys, Limited, of 48, Wigmore Street, London, W., supply a Midwives' case which complies with the requirements of the Central Midwives' Board. It measures 14½ in. by 6½ in. broad and 4½ in. deep, so that it is very compact and portable. The price of case fitted complete is £2 12s. 6d.

Two Prize Competitions.

The Editor offers the following prizes:—

No. 1. PUZZLE COMPETITION.

Details will be found on page viii.

No. 2. REMINISCENCE DURING TRAINING.

A prize of 10s. 6d. for the most interesting Reminiscence during Training, not to exceed 500 words. Papers competing for this prize must be received by the Editor not later than Saturday, February 10th. The paragraph gaining the prize and the name or pseudonym of the prize-winner will be published on February 17th.

CONDITIONS GOVERNING COMPETITION 2

Each competitor must enclose with his or her paragraph a sealed envelope, outside which is written the title of the contents only, and inside the title of the contents with the author's full name and address.

The Editor reserves to herself the right to publish any of the paragraphs received for the competition. In such event payment will be made at the current rate; such paragraph to become the property and copyright of the BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

All competitions must be addressed to the Editor, at 20, Upper Wimpole Street, London, W.

Notices.

THE SOCIETY FOR THE 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 iv. of cover, or can obtain all information concerning the Society and its work from the Hon. 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. Six copies, post free, 7d., or one copy 1½d. It gives a brief review of the history of State Registration.

CONTRIBUTIONS.

The Editor will at all times be pleased to consider articles of a suitable nature for insertion in this Journal—those on practical nursing are specially invited. The Editor will also be pleased to receive paragraphs, such as items of nursing news, results of nurses' examinations, new appointments, reports of hospital functions, also letters on questions of interest to nurses, and newspapers marked with reports of matters of professional interest.

Such communications must be duly authenticated with name and address, not necessarily for publication, but as evidence of good faith, and should be addressed to the Editor, 20, Upper Wimpole Street, London, W.

OUR PRIZE PUZZLE.

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

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)