

We shall be wise, I think, to observe the work of the Midwives' Board. The amount of business with which it has to deal is very great, and makes demands upon the members which are evidently felt to be burdensome. It is true the Midwives' Board consists of only nine members, but it governs the midwives in England and Wales alone, not in the whole of the United Kingdom.

I should like also to present the following facts for consideration. The returns at the last census showed in round numbers that the midwives in England and Wales were 3,000, nurses of the sick in the United Kingdom, as nearly as can be ascertained, for the census figures are somewhat obscure, 80,000. When the Midwives' Act was passed no less than 22,000 midwives succeeded in establishing their claim to be entered on the Roll during the two years' period of grace allowed. Here is a sum in simple proportion: As 3,000 : 22,000 :: 80,000 : x. We may hope and believe that the disproportion between the census returns and the actual number eligible for the Register may not be so great in the case of nurses as of midwives, but it is at least evident that within a few years the General Nursing Council will have to deal with many thousands of nurses. It is therefore important that it should have the machinery to enable it to do so.

Further, not only is a small Council necessarily unrepresentative, but there is a danger of large powers falling into the hands of a clique.

For all these reasons, though we may not get it, I think we should at least *ask* for an adequate Council.

Yours faithfully,
MARGARET BREAY.

THE ORGANIZATION OF COTTAGE HELPS. *To the Editor of the "British Journal of Nursing."*

DEAR MADAM,—I read with great interest the account in your last issue of the organisation of Cottage Helps in Germany. I sincerely wish some organisation of the same kind might be started in this country. It would prove a real boon to the poor, and would afford a safe outlet for the energies of those benevolent ladies who wish to assist their poorer neighbours, in a department in which they are presumably experts, namely, that of household management, although I am bound to say I go into few, houses even amongst the well-to-do, in which hospital trained nurses could not give "points" as to the best methods of cleaning to the mistresses. I just long to turn to and have a real good clean sometimes. However, we will assume that the Lady Bountiful is an expert on household affairs. She is not, however, one on nursing matters, and it is a thousand pities for her to attempt to define the standard of nursing required in the homes of the poor. She, in her turn, should leave this to nursing experts.

And the standard we as nurses, and the public who value the opinion of trained nurses, should lay down with regard to the nursing of the poor is this, to be satisfied with no system which does not uphold the fundamental truth that in times of sickness the poor need as skilled nurses as the rich, and that if

we assume the responsibility of providing the nurses it is our bounden duty to provide the fully trained.

One really good nurse can attend to a number of cases in the course of a day, and her work is, of course, much simplified if the Cottage Help looks after the cleanliness of the home and the food of the patient and her family. If the Help is expected to be nurse also, nursing standards are inevitably dragged down, and the nursing, such as it is, is so to speak thrown in with the rest of the work, instead of taking the important place which must be accorded to it if it is to be thorough. If the Cottage Help is a thoroughly trained nurse it is a waste of skilled labour to make her spend the greater portion of her time on unskilled work. If she is not fully trained then she cannot give the patient proper nursing attention. That is the matter in a nutshell. As a nation, however, we love quacks, and prefer to "muddle through" instead of doing a thing thoroughly, which is, I suppose, the reason why the Cottage Help, with a smattering of nursing, is beloved of philanthropists. I do not think, however, we should hear quite so much of her virtues were she not cheap. That is really the crux of the matter. To have the privilege of putting one's poorer neighbours to rights is one thing, to be willing to pay for that privilege is quite another thing.

I am, dear Madam,
Yours faithfully,
DISTRICT NURSE.

Comments and Replies.

Miss M. Harris.—Possibly the Twentieth Century Club, Stanley Gardens, W., might meet your needs. It is a ladies club of a social character for those engaged in professional or other work in London. A Residential Club for Nurses has recently been opened at 129, St. George's Road, S.W.

Massage.—Write to Dr. Fletcher Little, 32, Harley Street, Cavendish Square, London, W., for particulars as to terms. The Incorporated Society of Trained Masseuses, 12, Buckingham Street, Strand, will also give the names of instructors for pupils wishing to come up for its examination.

Miss L. Mollett.—We have communicated your request to the manager.

Notices.

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.

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