

THE HELPLESS POSITION OF MIDWIVES.

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

DEAR MADAM,—I entirely agree with the suggestion of your correspondent as to the importance of an Association for looking after the interests of midwives. If we had had one at the time the Midwives' Act was passed, we should undoubtedly have had a better one, *i.e.*, we should have had more representation on our Governing Body. Take the medical profession. Every member of the General Medical Council is a registered medical practitioner, and quite right, too. Take the Central Midwives' Board. We have one midwife upon it, and not one direct representative. I think the Board itself would cordially support the statement that the knowledge of this one midwife has been of immense benefit to it, but we want more.

The functions of the Board at present appear to me to be chiefly to look after the interests of the public, and that was badly enough needed, one knows. The ignorance and inefficiency of many women acting as midwives, and the crimes committed under the cloak of midwifery, were appalling, and needed to be dealt with with a firm hand. Perhaps this is the chief reason why the matter was taken up mainly from the public side, and so little from that of the midwife. The other reason, of course, was the want of organisation amongst midwives themselves, which, by the way, is a lesson to other women seeking legislation. The need of a strong society through which their views can be expressed, is essential to their interests. Even though, as your correspondent says, it is somewhat at the eleventh hour, it is of importance that an association should be founded to look after the interests of midwives. Further, in regard to the direct representation of midwives on the Central Midwives' Board, there are fair-minded men upon it, and I think if such an association is formed they might reasonably be asked to support midwives in endeavouring to gain that direct representation on their governing body upon which the medical profession lays such stress in its own case.

I am, Dear Madam,
Yours faithfully,
CERTIFICATED MIDWIFE.

Comments and Replies.

Miss A. H. H. Broadstairs.—Be out in the open air whenever you can, and sleep with your own window open at night, so as to endeavour to keep yourself in a good condition of health and thus increase your power of resistance against any kind of infection. As much as possible avoid all worry. Chloride of Lime is a strong disinfectant, but injures metal when diluted with acid. We should advise you to write for samples and literature concerning Izal and Chinosol, which are both of proved utility. For the former to Newton Chambers and Co., Ltd., Thorncliffe, near Sheffield, for the latter to the Chinosol Hygienic Co., 16, Rood Lane, E.C. We are glad to hear that you appreciate the Journal so much.

Maternity Nurse.—The wishes of the medical attendant with regard to the bathing of a premature infant should always be ascertained. A gentle cleansing on the lap of the nurse is often all that is desirable. The body and limbs are then frequently swathed in cotton wool, and the child not dressed. The less a premature child is handled the better as a rule.

The Nurses' Petition to the Prime Minister.

The Nurses' Petition to the Prime Minister respectfully pleading that the Government will undertake to introduce a Bill for the State Registration of Trained Nurses into the House of Commons next Session, will be found on page iv. in our advertisement columns. Will all who wish to support this Petition whether nurses, medical practitioners or members of the public, cut out this page, sign the Petition, invite others to do so, and then post it to the Hon. Secretary, Nurses Petition, 431, Oxford Street, London, W. Will our readers also make it known that anyone desiring to sign this Petition can do so at the above address. The time in which to organise this Petition is very short, so we hope all readers will help.

Notices.

THE SOCIETY FOR THE STATE REGISTRATION OF TRAINED NURSES.

The 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.

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 advt. page vi., or can obtain all information concerning the Society and its work from the Hon. Secretary, 431, Oxford Street, London, W.

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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