

ests, and insisted upon their payment, it would be far better for them.

Let us then place doctors in their right positions in country places, and insist upon the midwife acknowledging the limitations of her position, and I believe in this way the present opposition, which is far and away much less than suggested, will gradually diminish and disappear.

In conclusion, I am perfectly ready to send in the names of numbers of country doctors who will respond to what I have said in this letter.

Believe me,
Yours faithfully,
JOSEPHINE JOHNSTONE.

Bignor Park, Pulborough.

[The Central Midwives' Board thoroughly discussed the paragraph alluded to before adopting it. They, however, stated in their letter to the Privy Council that they did not officially receive reports on these subjects.—Ed.]

THE POSITION OF THE CHRISTIAN SCIENTIST.

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

DEAR MADAM,—The editorial note appended to my last letter causes me to ask once more for the courtesy of your columns for an explanation. In writing my first letter I was alluding only to your correspondent's suggestion that it was "inconceivable that a trained nurse should allow a patient to die without attempting to secure medical aid," the question as to the distinction drawn between fractured bones and inflamed lungs is a much larger one, but, with your permission, I will endeavour to make it plain.

The position is made perfectly clear in the text-book of Christian Science, *Science and Health*, by Mrs. Eddy. "If," she writes, "you sprain the muscles or wound the flesh, your remedy is at hand. Mind decides whether or not the flesh shall be discoloured, painful, swollen, and inflamed." The simple fact is that, in this respect, the teaching of Christian Science is, up to a certain point, that of modern idealism.

The idealist of the eighteenth century, Bishop Berkeley, declared emphatically that there was "no substance of matter, but only a substance of mind, which he terms spirit; that there are two kinds of spiritual substance, the one eternal and uncreated, the substance of the Deity, the other created, and, once created, naturally eternal; that the universe, as known to created spirits, has no being in itself."

The philosophical idealist of the twentieth century, Professor Ostwald, declares, "Matter is only a thing imagined, which we have constructed for ourselves, very imperfectly, to represent the constant element in the changing series of phenomena. Now we begin to understand that the actual, that is, that which acts upon us, is only energy, we have to ascertain by tests in what relation the two conceptions stand, and the result is without a doubt that of energy alone can reality be predicated."

It is perfectly clear from this that to the Churchman and to the chemist matter represents only the hypothetical substance of what the one

calls mind and the other energy. But, says Huxley, with relentless logic, "If the hypothetical substance of mind is possessed of energy, I, for my part, am unable to see how it is to be discriminated from the hypothetical substance of matter." As a fact, it cannot be, and that is why Mrs. Eddy wrote, forty years ago, "mortal mind and body combine as one."

It is because this fact has been to some extent grasped, and is being more firmly grasped every day, that Christian Science healing is being carried on without the use of drugs, and that the healing of wounds presents no particular difficulty. It is because the fact, that bones are just as much a subjective condition of mind as flesh, has not yet been so firmly grasped, that Mrs. Eddy has been led to advise those who are not prepared to rely implicitly on mental healing to apply to the ordinary surgeon.

The idealism of the theologian of the eighteenth century and the chemist of the twentieth century ultimate in this, in referring all physical phenomena to a first cause described by the one as Deity and by the other as energy. It is from this view that Christian Science so emphatically disents in its insistence on the unity of good and the unreality of physical phenomena, and in doing this it severs itself completely from hypnotism, mesmerism, or any other action of material energy. "The apostle Paul," writes Mrs. Eddy, "explains this warfare between the idea of divine power, which Jesus presented, and mythological material intelligence called energy, and opposed to Spirit." It is the understanding of this divine power, this *epignosis tou theou*, as Paul calls it, that is full, exact, knowledge of God, which constituted the truth of which Jesus spoke when he said, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free," free not only from sin as the world counts sin, but by reason of that from sorrow and sickness and death.

Yours truly,
FREDERICK DIXON.

COMMENTS AND REPLIES.

County Matron and others.—The Committee organising the Congratulatory Dinner to Miss Isla Stewart will meet at an early date. We are of opinion that as far as space permits such a function should express the appreciation of her work for the Profession at large. The distinctive note of Miss Stewart's career has been her devoted service for nursing as a whole—not for any particular school of nurses. The Matrons' Council, a society of which she has been President since its inception in 1894, has taken the initiative in forming the Committee, and it is receiving all the external support it could desire.

OUR PUZZLE COMPETITION.

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

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

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