

Infective organisms can gain entrance into the tissues of the newly-born in many ways:

1. Through the umbilical wound.
2. By scratches, abrasions, and injured surfaces.
3. By the conjunctival mucous membrane.
4. Through the mouth.
5. By the air passages.
6. By the alimentary canal.

A disease now very rare is "tetanus neonatorum." As is well known, it was at one time so prevalent in the island of St. Kilda's that almost all the new-born children died. The inhabitants realised that the race would be wiped out if nothing were done to eradicate it, and a professor of the University of Glasgow was consulted, who put them on the right track. It was found that the mud floors of the houses contained the infectious tetanus organism, and the stump of the cord of the newly-born infants was enveloped in infected rags. A wise and judicious nurse was sent to the island to see that the umbilical cords of newly-born infants were properly dressed, shielded, and cared for, with the result that the disease was eradicated.

Another disease in the new-born once common and now fortunately rare is erysipelas.

Ophthalmia neonatorum is to be guarded against by proper care of the conjunctiva.

Septic invasion may also occur through other channels which should have been properly guarded.

I have only briefly touched upon some of the commonest disorders incident to birth. I trust, however, that I have indicated how much loss of life may occur, and suffering may persist through life as a result of neglect of the disorders of infancy. I would urge all who have practical opportunities to show how many of these disorders may be avoided, and how many of them are entirely preventable.

#### QUEEN ALEXANDRA'S IMPERIAL MILITARY NURSING SERVICE RESERVE.

Personal interviews for candidates or intending candidates for the above-named Service in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh and Glasgow have been arranged as follows:—

Miss Keer, Matron-in-Chief, Q.A.I.M.N.S., will attend at the Military Hospital, Maryhill, Glasgow, on September 10th, at 11 a.m.

Miss Isla Stewart, Matron of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, London, will attend at the Military Hospital, The Castle, Edinburgh, on September 15th, at 11 a.m.

Information regarding this Service, the Forms of Application, and Regulations, will be supplied to all candidates applying personally on these dates.

## The Nurses' Registration Bill.

### AN OPEN LETTER TO MY NURSES.

#### III.

MY DEAR NURSE,—The Nurses' Registration Bill contains many other points of interest and importance besides those to which I drew your attention last week; and, first, let me refer you again to the constitution of the Council, which we saw to consist of fifteen persons, appointed and elected by six different bodies and groups of persons. The first five of these bodies are already in existence—viz., the Privy Council, the Local Government Board, the General Medical Council, the British Medical Association, and the Medico-Psychological Association, and no doubt these bodies could, if they chose, select and appoint to-morrow their representatives; but when we come to the electors of the representatives of the sixth group—the Registered Nurses—it is evident that at present such an electorate does not exist, and the Council must create the Register before the nurses can have their names entered in it, and so become possessed of the right to vote.

To meet this difficulty, it is proposed that on the first Council, instead of the six Registered Nurses elected by their fellows, there shall be substituted two past or present hospital and infirmary Matrons, to be appointed by the Matrons' Council of Great Britain and Ireland, one past or present asylum Matron, to be appointed by the Asylum Workers' Association, one nurse, to be appointed by Queen Victoria's Jubilee Institute, one nurse, to be appointed by the Royal British Nurses' Association, one nurse, to be appointed by the Society for the State Registration of Trained Nurses. The Bill further provides that these six persons shall sit on the Council until such time as the Register is formed and the electorate ready for voting purposes.

In any case, no member of the Council is to hold office for more than five years without re-election.

It is obvious that the preparation of the Register, its constant revision, the conduct of qualifying examinations, and the remuneration of the examiners will be very costly, if it is to be carried out in at all a satisfactory manner, and it is equally evident that the nurses who are to be so greatly benefitted are the proper persons to bear the expense. It is suggested in the Bill to meet this by imposing fees for (a) Registration, (b) Examina-

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)