

Here is yet another example which goes to prove the pressing need of elimination; in other words: State Registration for Nurses.

I earnestly hope that when this most desirable reform becomes law, some means will be adopted to prevent unqualified people from arrogating to themselves the right—the monopoly of right as in this case—to settle parochial nursing affairs. I have always held my uniform in reverent respect, but cases like this make one feel that the kitchen fire is the only place for it—since it is so smirched and dishonoured.

BEATRICE KENT.

THE DANGER OF UNREGISTERED NURSES.

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

DEAR MADAM,—I am glad to observe that Dr. Knyvett Gordon drew attention in a recent issue to the danger to lying-in patients of the unregistered monthly nurse.

He shows that midwives are now under the control and supervision of the Central Midwives' Board, but that many—probably the majority—of confinements take place under the supervision of a doctor "with a 'nurse' of some sort in attendance also." Of course, it is easy to say that the doctor should make sure that the nurse working under him is thoroughly trained for her work and personally suitable to be introduced into the houses of his patients. But how can a busy medical practitioner inquire into the references of every nurse he employs? It is absurd to suppose it possible. Certificates? Yes; but certificates have no definite value. We hear much of standardisation of disinfectants, but there is none of nurses' certificates. Besides, certificates may be forged or borrowed, and if a doctor is dissatisfied with a nurse, and even recommends her dismissal, there is nothing, as Dr. Gordon points out, to prevent her from going from a case of puerperal fever to attend another woman in her confinement under another doctor. The medical profession are thus on the horns of a dilemma. Shall they advise their patients to engage midwives to nurse them through their confinements who have passed the examination of the Central Midwives' Board, and thus been required to show evidence of a certain amount of experience and skill in the nursing care of lying-in patients, but who may intimate to these patients that there is no necessity to engage a doctor on the next occasion; or shall they be satisfied with nurses whose qualifications cannot be verified by reference to a Register of Nurses published under State authority, since at present such a Register is non-existent?

The public, if it prefers to employ women whose nursing knowledge is an unverified quantity, will always be able to do so, but it should at least have the opportunity of selecting such as have gained admission to a State Register if it desires to do so.

Yours faithfully,

UNREGISTERED NURSE AND CERTIFIED MIDWIFE.

THE SAFETY OF THE X-RAYS.

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

DEAR MADAM,—In the universal sympathy which the Press has extended to Mr. Cox, in his present misfortune, we think that undue stress is being laid on the "Dangers of X-Rays."

The exaggerated reports which appeared some time ago, consequent upon the sufferings of some of the earliest pioneers, created a scare which was injurious in many ways. It affected not only the English manufacturer and the medical man, who were sufficiently enterprising to take up the new treatment, but also to a considerable extent deprived the public of the benefit of the discovery which has been of such incalculable value in the relief of suffering and the advancement of medical knowledge.

It cannot be too strongly pointed out that the only danger in the rays was to the earlier pioneers and operators.

As the result of the experiments of Dr. Hall Edwards, Mr. H. W. Cox, and others, apparatus has been devised which entirely obviates any danger either to the patient or to the operator; while the experiments of MM. Sabouraud and Noiré in France have determined the maximum exposure which may be given with safety to the human skin. The rays are now used with perfect safety in thousands of hospitals throughout the world in the treatment of a great variety of diseases. One London public institution alone which we have equipped with apparatus, has treated over 800 children for ringworm during the last year without a single failure or a single case of X-Ray burn, even of the mildest description. This fact alone proves the great value of the rays in therapeutics, and also the safety with which they are used in modern practice.

The precautions to be taken are simple and well understood, and no one need have the least hesitation in undergoing X-Ray treatment under the supervision of a qualified medical man.

We are, Dear Madam,

Yours faithfully,

HARRY W. COX & CO., LTD.,

C. WAITE, Secretary.

47, Gray's Inn Road, London, W. C.

Comments and Replies.

Cambridge.—Write to Miss Mary Browne, Secretary, Guild of St. Barnabas, Church House, Westminster, London, S.W.

Miss M. H., Whitstable.—We know of no Association for Maternity Nurses organised on the lines you speak of.

Private Nurse.—Messrs. Thomas Wallis and Co., Ltd., Holborn Circus, E.C., supply uniform bonnets, which are both neat and becoming at very reasonable prices. We advise you to inspect these.

OUR PUZZLE COMPETITION.

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

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