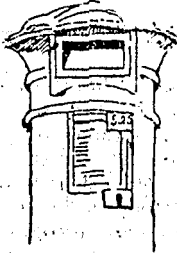


## Letters to the Editor.



Whilst cordially inviting communications upon all subjects for these columns, we wish it to be distinctly understood that we do not in any way hold ourselves responsible for the opinions expressed by our correspondents.

### THE CONGRESS AT COLOGNE.

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

DEAR MADAM,—I was greatly pleased to read the letter from "A Member of the International Council of Nurses" in your issue of 22nd ult., with its suggestion that nurses who wish to go to the International Congress of Nurses, to be held in Cologne in 1912, should begin to save money for it now. I shall have much pleasure in acting as "banker" to the Irish Section if no one else has already come forward.

I am, yours truly,

A. W. SAMPSON (Matron).

Bloomfield, Donnybrook, Dublin.

[We should advise our correspondent to consult the Irish Nurses' Association on this matter.—Ed.]

### THE WORRIES OF MIDWIVES.

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

DEAR MADAM,—Knowing how interested you are in midwives, I am sending you a notice which appeared in our local paper this week, showing that the midwives in this town will not in the future attend private cases for a lower fee than 10s. 6d. At the same time I should like to thank you for the valuable information contained in the BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING. I have taken it in for the past three years, and so do most of the midwives in this town. I wonder if you know what a comfort it is to know that there is at least one Journal to give us fair play.

There has been such a lot written about doctors and midwives being at logger heads that perhaps you might like to know how we get on here. Before the Midwives' Act came in force I do not think you could have found a happier or more contented class of workers than we were. There are six of us on the staff of this dispensary, and we are entitled to call in medical help whenever it is required. Now, in the old days, before the passing of the Act, the doctors always came quite willingly to help us in our private work, whether the fee was forthcoming or not.

What a change after the Act came into force! The doctors told us kindly that they had nothing against us individually, but they could not come to our help in future unless the fee was paid in advance.

I venture to say a more worried or harassed lot of women would have been hard to find. On the one hand no help from the doctors, whom we had learned to look up to as friends in need, and on the other the Central Midwives' Board, with what seemed at the time its almost endless rules and penal cases.

However, the doctor who is our local supervising authority has always been most kind and helpful, and we have none of us ever been afraid to go to him and consult him, feeling from the kind and thoughtful way in which he received us, and listened to all our worries and troubles, that we had a real friend instead of a deadly enemy, as seems to be the case in only too many towns. I am glad to say that our troubles have gradually faded away, thanks to the guardians here we can now call in one of the parish doctors, of whom there are two, the guardians recovering the fee where they think it fair to do so.

Also, the doctor who is our local supervising authority, kindly arranged last winter for a course of lectures on midwifery, so that we might be brought quite up to date. So things have straightened themselves out.

I may say most of the doctors have fallen back into their old way of coming to help us first and asking about their fee afterwards, and to do us justice we always endeavour to get it for them, never thinking of taking anything ourselves until the doctor is settled with.

I do not know whether you will approve our action in raising our fees, but when you consider how many cases we attend without payment, and how rare a thing it is for a midwife to take any steps to recover her fee from a poor patient, you will, I hope, agree with me 10s. 6d. is not too much. At the same time the mere fact that we are beginning to see the value of co-operating shows that midwives are not quite the ignorant, uneducated class some people consider.

Hoping you don't think this long letter tiresome.

Yours faithfully,

CERTIFICATED MIDWIFE.

[We consider 10s. 6d. a very reasonable fee for a midwifery case, and the least a working woman can live on. Where poor people cannot afford so much, midwifery attendance should be provided, as the parish doctor is, by the rates. Voluntary Associations are very disinclined to provide midwives with a living wage—very poor economy in the end.—Ed.]

## Comments and Replies.

Miss M. R. P., Leicester.—The Fever Nurses' Association has a medical man and a matron as conjoint Secretaries, Dr. Biernacki, Medical Superintendent, Plaistow Fever Hospital, E., and Miss L. A. Morgan, Matron of the Northern Hospital, Winchmore Hill, N.

Miss F. W., Rawtenstall.—The paper is *La Garde Malade Hospitaliere*. It is obtainable from 96 bis, rue Laroche, Bordeaux.

Miss A. G. W., Scarborough.—An excellent handbook which we think would be useful to you is "First Aid to the Injured and Sick," published by John Wright and Sons, Ltd., Bristol, price 1s. You might write to the Central Red Cross Society, 9, Victoria Street, S.W.

### OUR PUZZLE PRIZE.

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

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