

stead of that of the public health authority. Probably the noble Lords do not see any difference. But many a worthy woman has a feeling of shame and indignity at having anything to do with the Poor Law and the Relieving Officer.

If the Board of Guardians, instead of the Town or County Council, is (for the first time) required to pay the doctor's fee, and to decide whether or not it will recover the amount from the patient, it will inevitably use the Poor Law machinery for this purpose—the visits of inquiry of the Relieving Officer, the summons to attend before the Board, and so on, just as if the matter were one of parochial relief. Indeed, the official argument used for the clause is that this use of the Relieving Officer affords the most convenient machinery for making the inquiries.

The Government has been warned by all those concerned, by the representatives of the Midwives' Institute, the Central Midwives' Board, the Society of Medical Officers of Health, the British Medical Association, the Municipal Corporations Association, such typical County Councils as those of Lancashire and Nottinghamshire, and such important Town Councils as that of Manchester, that to import the Board of Guardians into the delicate and difficult business of providing medical aid in these cases of emergency will, as a matter of fact, deter midwife and patient from calling in the doctor. Lord Sheffield and other noble lords expressly say that they hope it will have that effect!

The second hardship is the new financial burden which the Bill, for the first time, places on these unfortunate families. I see no reason why, when the State insists on the medical man being called in, on public health grounds, any repayment of the fee should be insisted on; and it is a distinct grievance that the liability will be, not to pay the modest fee which the doctor would have charged to the poor patient herself, but the one or two guineas which (quite rightly) the Local Government Board will fix as the sum that the doctor may charge to the Public Authority. But, even if it is thought that the Public Authority ought to be able to recover the amount, this is no reason for taking the duty out of the hands of the Public Health Authority and giving it to the Poor Law Authority. Neither has now the power to recover the fee. Either of them could be given that power if desired.

Can anything be done between now and the re-assembling of Parliament in November to prevent the House of Commons from passing Clause 17 of this Bill? I shall be glad if anyone willing to help, or desiring further particulars, will communicate with me.

I am, etc.;

BEATRICE WEBB (Mrs. Sidney Webb).

The National Committee for Prevention of
Destitution,

37, Norfolk Street, Strand, W.C.

[Nurses are fully aware how the deserving poor dread pauperisation. We hope those of our readers who realise the hardships to which Mrs. Sidney Webb alludes will write to any member of Parliament with whom they or their family are acquainted and ask them to oppose Clause 17 of the

Midwives' Bill as it stands. Lord Amptill took this course in the House of Lords but, unfortunately, his policy was not adopted.—Ed.]

THE NURSING OF MALE PATIENTS.

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

DEAR EDITOR,—Having read in a recent number of the BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING your criticism of the remarks of Dr. Renshaw at the Catholic Congress in Leeds, I think it only fair to the Catholic body that you should see the enclosed extract from the *Universe and Catholic Weekly*.

I am, yours faithfully,

A CATHOLIC NURSE.

The extract is as follows:—

"It may be counted as one of life's little ironies that the things men say and do in their less-wise moments are just the things which get embarrassing attention. Of the many papers read at the Catholic Congress at Leeds last week, none seems to have attracted so much notice as Dr. Renshaw's, rather remarkable denunciation of lady doctors, female nurses for men, and women generally in these and similar spheres of life. The paper has caused a mild sensation in the North, space being devoted to it in the newspapers which its author must not mind if we say is out of all proportion to its worth. By this time we hope it has been made clear that in writing as he did, Dr. Renshaw was not only stating what was merely a personal opinion, but that the opinion is certainly not that of his co-religionists as a body, nor do we think there are many individual Catholics who share his view. A more characteristic expression of the Catholic attitude towards women in the healing professions was supplied at the great mass meeting in the Town Hall on Sunday afternoon, when one of the most applauded papers was that by a lady doctor, commending her calling and recounting her experiences."

[It is impossible to believe that Dr. Renshaw's views are shared by many of his co-religionists.—Ed.]

JAPAN-BRITISH EXHIBITION AWARDS.

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

DEAR MADAM,—On the 9th July the name of our firm appeared in the List of Awards as the only recipients of the Grand Prix for Disinfectants, and we duly announced that fact by an advertisement in the columns of your journal. We now learn (eight weeks after the original publication of the list) that within the last few days a similar distinction has been conferred upon another firm of manufacturers, making our statement erroneous as at the present time. We now ask the courtesy of your columns to correct our statement, which was, of course, made in good faith, and in no sense intended to mislead.

Yours, etc.,

For Jeyes' Sanitary Compounds, Co. Ltd.,

WM. SEAMER,

Secretary.

OUR PUZZLE PRIZE.

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

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