

nursing. On one hand we have the Queen's Nurse, with her three years' hospital training and special additional training in district nursing, including instruction in hygiene and social conditions, who is often a certified midwife in addition. On the other, the Cottage Nurse working under the Holt-Ockley or Cottage Benefit Nursing Associations, who may be a certified midwife but is more often a maternity nurse, with some small smattering of general nursing gained in the homes and at the expense of the poor. Between these two extremes are all varieties of standards, but the tendencies of the Committees of Nursing Associations in rural districts to employ certified midwives to nurse the sick poor, giving them the title and position of trained nurses, is a growing evil only to be combated by the legal definition of a standard of education for professional nurses.

SCHOOL NURSING.

A most useful branch of nursing is that concerned in the care of school children. Educational authorities are learning that their whole duty has not been accomplished when they have brought the children in the schools up to the level of the sixth standard, but that their bodies as well as their minds must be cared for; that warmth, food, light, air and cleanliness are necessary to right physical development, and that children must be taught the elementary principles of hygiene, the application of soap and water, the care of the teeth and other details of personal cleanliness. In relation to all these points the work of the school nurse is of great value. Where necessary she can visit the homes of the children and explain to parents or guardians the necessity for and methods of special treatment. In the case of crippled and delicate children she has her definite place in special invalid and outdoor schools, which have been organized with most beneficial results in various centres. When school clinics are established, which is apparently only a question of time, the school nurse will be a still more important factor in the educational system, and, in co-operation with the medical profession, will help materially to raise the standard of the national health, provided that she is selected from the ranks of the fully trained and well-educated nurses, for much experience and sound judgment are needed by workers in this branch.

THE TRAINED MATERNITY NURSES' ASSOCIATION.

A Trained Maternity Nurses' Association has been formed, with offices at 33, Strand, the

principal objects of which are the mutual protection of members, the maintenance of a Register and Employment Bureau, and the promotion of State Registration for Trained Nurses.

SOCIAL SERVICE.

An increasing number of nurses are taking up work along the lines of social service, and there seems to be a considerable awakening as to their duty in regard to venereal diseases. They realize that, for a class of the community whose duties often include the care of patients suffering from these diseases, a knowledge of their causes, symptoms and care is essential, and that three years' hospital training has most often left them without guidance or instruction on these necessary points. Hence the interest shown by nurses in literature of an educational nature on these subjects. And as we can only study diseases aright by comparing them with healthy conditions, therefore instruction in the physiology and hygiene of sex is necessary to the nurse who wishes to build up her knowledge of deviations from the normal on a sound foundation.

THE NATIONAL INSURANCE ACT.

The National Insurance Act affects millions of men and women in the United Kingdom, compelling them to insure against sickness. It also gives power to Approved Societies and Local Health Committees to grant subscriptions or donations for the support of district nurses, and to appoint nurses for the purpose of visiting and nursing insured persons. The important points in this connection are:—

(1) In relation to the insured, that, while only registered medical practitioners and certified midwives may be employed under the Act—*i.e.*, those who have satisfied a professional authority of their fitness to be so recognised, in regard to nurses no such guarantee is given, nor is the word "trained" mentioned. This is due, in the first instance, to the fact that there is no statutory qualification for, or registration of, trained nurses, and therefore some special definition was necessary in the Act if skilled nursing was to be guaranteed to insured persons. As this course has not been adopted there is nothing to prevent women with quite inadequate training from being subsidized by societies and committees, and it has become urgent that a Nurses' Registration Act, defining the standard for a trained nurse, should be passed without delay.

(2) In relation to trained nurses the position is that the skilled work, for which the State should employ and pay them, may be given to unskilled or insufficiently trained workers.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)