

qualified to advise upon the practical problems which will arise in the administration of the National Insurance Act, and from various names suggested to them chose three ladies of wide practical experience, viz.: Miss M. Hardman, Superintendent, Leicester District Nursing Association; Miss A. Hughes, Queen Victoria's Jubilee Institute for Nurses; Miss A. Michie, Superintendent, Worcester City and County Nursing Association—all of whom have consented to serve upon the Committee.

Since they have been fortunate in obtaining the advice of Nurses who possess an intimate knowledge of the conditions and requirements of nursing work in country districts, in towns, and in London, the Commission are unable to agree with your statement that "the class of women which will have to perform the greater part of the very arduous work for the sick poor under the Insurance Act will be the only one denied independent representation upon the Advisory Committee." The Commission are perfectly satisfied that these ladies are thoroughly qualified to advise upon questions affecting their profession.

I am further directed to point out that the great variety of interests specially affected by the Insurance Act makes it impossible to include a large number of representatives of each upon the Advisory Committee. The inclusion of no less than three Nurses is a recognition of the particular importance of the problems on which their advice will be needed. In addition, the Commission have obtained the services of two Midwives, as members of the Advisory Committee, viz.: Mrs. Bedingfield, Miss Alice Gregory, both of the Incorporated Midwives' Institute, whose knowledge will also be valuable in this connection, since Midwives will also have to perform "arduous work for the sick poor under the Insurance Act."

In requesting nominations from the important Nursing Associations of the country, the Commission took care to point out that they did not desire to work out a scheme of numerically proportional representation of different interests, but to secure that the advice given in regard to draft regulations should be thoroughly well informed. They see no reason for doubting that the Nurses and Midwives, above-named, who have promised their services, will be in any way incapable of advising correctly as to the "standard of nursing and the remuneration of nurses."

I am,
Yours obediently,
L. G. BROCK.

The National Council of Trained Nurses of Great Britain and Ireland.

431, Oxford Street, London, W.

May 18th, 1912.

SIR,—I beg to acknowledge your letter of May 16th, on behalf of the National Health Insurance Commission (England), and find no argument therein contained which controverts our contention that the nursing profession has been excluded from direct representation, through its organi-

sations, upon the Advisory Committees appointed under the Insurance Act—an exclusion the more marked because the privilege has been accorded to the medical profession, through the British Medical Association and the Association of Registered Medical Women; and to the midwives, through the Incorporated Midwives' Institute, with whom we shall be associated in carrying out the provisions of the Act.

However admirable in their official capacity the three Superintendents of the Queen Victoria's Jubilee Institute may be, they cannot claim, neither are they at liberty, to represent the opinions and interests of the nursing profession at large, or its organisations, of which they are not members. Thus the fact remains that while granting representation to every class of industrial and professional women workers through their trades unions, and associations, the Commissioners have excluded trained nurses from such power and privilege as this representation confers.

That the Commissioners do not agree with my statement that "the class of women which will have to perform the greater part of the very arduous work for the sick poor under the Insurance Act, will be the only one denied independent representation upon the Advisory Committees" does not alter the fact that the unjust discrimination of the Commissioners against it places the nursing profession in this position; and its justifiable contention is that it should have power to advise the Commissioners concerning "the standard of nursing and the remuneration of nurses" under the Act, for the same reasons that the medical profession and the midwives claimed, and have been granted, this power; to provide for the efficient care of the insured sick, and the protection of the worker from unjust and injurious conditions of labour.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

ETHEL G. FENWICK, *President*.

To the Chairman,
National Health Insurance Commission.

P.S.—May I be permitted to state that I am not a "Sir," as addressed by "L. G. Brock," nor a "Miss," as inscribed on the envelope containing the letter from the National Health Insurance Commission (England)!

OUR PRIZE COMPETITION.

We regret that none of the answers in our prize competition this week in our opinion merit the award of a prize. This is the more disappointing as the question concerns the practical work of nurses—the daily service of food in the wards in an appetising form, with the details of which all nurses should be familiar.

QUESTION FOR NEXT WEEK.

What is the right method of nasal feeding?

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)