

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.

AN HONOURABLE DISTINCTION.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—One of the greatest pleasures to those of us who hail from the colonial dominions is the home news we get in England through your journal. I was delighted to read that the nurses in Ontario have got an Act which gives them the title of "Registered Nurse." I was born in Montreal, and it is to be hoped the nurses in Quebec will soon obtain the same honourable distinction. The contempt for women who work in England by those who make the laws, and ladies of leisure is something quite incomprehensible to Canadians, who only despise those who do nothing but play: that is the reason we are really a happier people.

Yours gratefully,

A CANADIAN NURSE.

"THE QUALITY OF MERCY IS NOT STRAINED."

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—I think it is very regrettable that the applications of midwives for advice when in difficulties are received with such scant sympathy by their governing body. For instance, I notice in last week's JOURNAL that a midwife asked the Board's advice as to the payment of a fee claimed by a medical practitioner summoned on her advice. The Board replied that she had discharged her duty under the rules by advising that a doctor should be summoned—a fact of which she was quite aware—and tartly told her it was no part of its duty to give legal advice. Certainly no compulsion is placed upon it by Act of Parliament, but it might remember that if one never exceeds one's duty, one does not always fulfil it. It was a great man—perhaps I had better not name him—who said, "The quality of mercy is not strained. . . . It blesses him that gives and him that takes."

I am, Dear Madam,

Yours faithfully,
CERTIFIED MIDWIFE.

THE FUNCTIONS OF THE CENTRAL MIDWIVES' BOARD.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—The point raised by you in relation to the trial of midwives by the Central Midwives' Board is very important. The Board cannot be strictly judicial if one of its officers is the prosecutor, and I know that many midwives

and others competent to judge think that the Local Supervising Authority which has investigated the case locally, and therefore is acquainted with the pros and cons, should be the prosecutor. The contest is most unequal when an ignorant and uncultured midwife is pitted against a highly trained solicitor, accustomed to seize upon every point which can be employed to his advantage in securing a conviction, and who is often too poor to appear before the Board at all, so that the prosecution has it all its own way. It is very noticeable in your reports how when midwives do appear to answer the charges brought against them even, in spite of their inexperience in "making points," much transpires in their favour which otherwise would not be known.

I think when an Amending Bill is brought in the present anomalous conditions might be rectified by an amending clause, providing that the functions of the Board should be judicial only, just as those of the General Medical Council are.

I am, Dear Madam,

Yours faithfully,
A SUPERINTENDENT OF MIDWIVES.

REPLIES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

L. Routledge, -St. Anne's.—Write direct to Miss A. Turton, Scuola Convitto Regina Elena, Policlinico, Rome, Italy. She will give you the most reliable information in answer to your question.

Health Visitor, Manchester.—The address you require is the International Association for Labour Legislation, British Section, 4, Bloomsbury Square, London, W.C. It aims at an international standard in industrial laws, and takes up such questions as lead poisoning, &c., in the hope of creating sound public opinion on the disuse of lead in the glaze of china and thus saving the workers from many forms of suffering which result from its use. For instance, if women would only buy and use porcelain finished with a leadless glaze, the poisoning of ignorant workers and their offspring would soon cease.

OUR PRIZE COMPETITIONS FOR JUNE.

June 15th.—Mention the principal points to be considered in the general care of the operating room.

June 22nd.—What symptoms would lead you to suspect puerperal thrombosis of the lower extremities?

June 29th.—Describe the methods of applying (a) dry cupping, (b) wet cupping.

NOTICE.

If unable to procure THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING through a newsagent, the manager desires to be informed of the fact. Copies can always be procured at the offices, 431, Oxford Street, London, W., and through Messrs. W. H. Smith & Son. In Scotland from Menzies & Co., Glasgow; and in Ireland from Fanning & Co., Dublin.

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