

suggested two or three provincial hospitals known to her, and in one of these I was eventually accepted. Later experience proved London hospital life to agree with me perfectly when I was Sister and Assistant Matron in a special hospital.

This is neither here nor there, only that it proves appearance is not enough to go upon in gauging strength, and how the whole course of one's life may be altered by another person's judgment.

Now the training in this provincial hospital was excellent. I would back its nurses against the average London ones any day. Having no medical school, much surgical work that is usually done by students fell to us, and the class of individuals gathered there left nothing to be desired. But a certificate of training was given after two years! It has lost me more than one good post in my life, but on looking back I hardly think I would have changed had I seen all. Very likely I should have stayed on to a humdrum hospital life year after year. The fact of having something to combat and also feeling the need of more experience, made me very keen on getting it, and I succeeded, first in private nursing on the Continent, then as Charge-Nurse in a workhouse hospital (with trained Superintendent and staff), of a block of 103 beds; after that as Matron of a cottage hospital, Sister in a London one, then abroad as Nursing-Superintendent of two hospitals in 3½ years. Probably few "three years' certificated" nurses could match the number of abnormal confinements, Cæsarian sections, and other major operations I have assisted at. Add to this the varied experience of life that tells for so much in the upper reaches of every profession, and not less than any in the management of a nursing home. Is it all to go for naught? Two contemporaries of mine who were at the same hospital also run nursing homes in England, and they are each in their line first-rate. Would it be just to condemn these owners and taboo their Homes on account of a technicality—for that it by now amounts to—in favour of the tyro just free from her first hospital with a three years' certificate? Or must they quit the field and deprive patients of the benefit of their valuable experience? Or return, if that be possible, and put in a third year as probationer when middle-aged?

Let it not be thought I am in favour of a short course of training. I am fighting on the side of an extended one, and registration as well, but I think we need to extend our view sometimes in order to be just and wise in our dealings.

Yours, &c.,

S. M.

Punjab, India.

[We gather that in organising a system of registration of nursing homes our correspondent does not approve of the system being retrospective, as injustice might be done. This may be so, and no Association for the purpose, could succeed unless the standard adopted included experienced trained nurses who are now

heads of nursing homes. We quite agree that experience is most valuable, but that for the future we must start from a minimum term of training, and that term all over the world has been accepted, with one or two glaring exceptions, as not less than three years' experience in the wards before certification. The go-as-you-please system in England has resulted during the past fifteen years in a rapid deterioration in the nursing profession as a whole, and the control and promotion of its members, by social influence, irrespective of either personal merit or training. We see this on every side. In the Army, and throughout the length and breadth of the land in the nursing of the sick poor, and in private nursing, it is specially demonstrated. No profession can stand firm and progress from the shifting basis of social patronage. It must have defined standards, legal status and disciplinary control. We are glad to note our correspondent is working in India for such reforms.—ED.]

#### OUR PRIZE COMPETITIONS.

*November 23rd.*—How should a nurse care for her hands so that they are kept in the best condition for use in the sick room?

*November 30th.*—What form of infection is likely to follow the retention of a piece of the placenta after delivery, and what are its characteristics?

#### OUR CHRISTMAS COMPETITION.

##### TOYS FOR TINIES.

Four Five Shilling Prizes will be awarded in December for the best toys made at the cost of not more than 6d. The toys must be sent to the Editorial Office, 20, Upper Wimpole Street, London, W., by December 14th, with the coupon which will appear in the issue of December 7th. All the toys will be distributed to poor children under five years of age, so they should be made to meet the tastes of tinies.

#### NOTICES.

The Editor hopes that every reader who values THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING, will get one or more new subscribers—so that its constructive work for the profession may receive ever increasing support.

It is the only weekly journal which demands efficient educational and economic standards for trained nurses through an Act of Parliament, providing for their State Registration.

The price is 1d. weekly. Abroad, 9s. per year, post free. Office, 431, Oxford Street, London, W.

#### BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS.

The Editor will be obliged if all business communications, such as requiring extra journals, &c., are addressed to the Manager, THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING Office, 431, Oxford Street, London, W., and not to the Editorial office at 20, Upper Wimpole Street, W.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)