

get well-educated probationers in Poor Law Infirmaries, or to keep well-trained nurses; I have been almost in despair this last year. This should not be if the value of nursing was properly estimated, but so long as so many ignorant people meddle with it, we can hope for little improvement. I quite endorse your suggestion that there should be a Nursing Department at the Local Government Board. I believe many Boards of Guardians would welcome such a centre of information, and practical help. We have advertised for nurses more than once this year and not received one single reply. At one time I did not see the need for registration—now I realise that Nursing, like medicine and midwifery, must be encouraged by the State, and standards defined, or there is little hope for any improvement in nursing ranks; things are now decidedly on the down-grade, and a matron's life becomes a very anxious one.

Yours truly,

A POOR LAW MATRON.

THE DEPRECIATION OF DISTRICT NURSING.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—My daughter, a strong, well-educated girl, with the right temperament had quite made up her mind to become a trained nurse. We wrote round to hospitals for papers and rules, and decided that the thing should be done thoroughly, and three years given up to qualify for her duties.

Imagine my surprise when visiting a cottager, to learn that one of the girls, by no means the pick of the basket, had been engaged by the County Nursing Association for a term of years, if she underwent six months' training in nursing, and six as a midwife. At the end of the year she would be in charge of a district miles from a doctor, have the title of "nurse," and wear nurse's uniform. But the best is to tell. This very ill-educated girl was to be trained in *six months* at the same institution at which my daughter was to be compelled to work for *three years*! Moreover, midwifery was not included in the latter scheme, so that after three years' hard work my daughter would only have a hospital certificate, which apparently counts for nothing, but the district nurse, after six months' training at the same hospital could take precedence as a "certified midwife," and act as an independent practitioner!

It seems like a Gilbert and Sullivan opera.

Why is such gross injustice allowed? Is there no order or standard for Nursing?

Anyway, my daughter has now decided to take up other work.

Yours sincerely,

A CLERGYMAN'S WIFE.

[We fear many well educated well disciplined girls, such as are so urgently required in hospitals and infirmaries, are deciding to take up other work, and the standard even in the leading hospitals

is difficult to keep up. The fact remains that there is no standard of nursing, it's all go as you please, and confusion must get worse confounded until the Registration Bill becomes law. It is to be hoped that as soon as all our Colonies have registration in force they will discriminate against us as quacks. We may then hope for legislation providing for reciprocity, or allow Germany to supply any surplus required. Several excellent registered nurses, charming highly educated women at Cologne, were anxious for full information concerning nursing prospects in Canada, South Africa, and elsewhere. When Mrs. Humphrey Ward and her noble Griseldas state in the public press that women's interests are safe in the hands of men, let them study the sordid history, extending over a quarter of a century, of the unscrupulous opposition to nursing legislation, or for ever hold their futile prattle.—ED.]

THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE PRESS.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—I read what Lord Northcliffe said at the dinner of the Society of Women Journalists, about the independence of the press. I concluded he meant that it conducted its public work without prejudice. I therefore addressed a letter to one of his publications on State Registration of Nurses, as I had often noticed nasty little "anti" expressions of opinion, were freely inserted. My letter in support was not printed. That of a friend in favour has never appeared. Surely Lord Northcliffe is not aware of this partisan conduct of his paper; or if he is, where is its independence and fairness?

Yours,

A JOURNALIST NURSE.

[Don't waste time in writing to the *Daily Mail*, *The Times*, the *Daily Telegraph*, or *Westminster Gazette* in support of just educational or economic conditions, for trained nurses, or of protection of the sick from the exploitation of the untrained. The demand for Nurses' Registration has been persistently boycotted by these publications for years, and during the past session a proprietor of the *Daily Telegraph*, who is on the committee of the London Hospital, has been blocker in chief of the Nurses' Registration Bill. Moreover, don't waste pence on them. Now that the "Woman's Platform" in the *Standard* is open to an expression of independent opinion on all questions affecting women, use it, and recommend it to your friends. One good turn deserves another.—ED.]

OUR PRIZE COMPETITION.

January 11th.—Describe the chief abnormalities of the Pulse.

January 18th.—Describe the most unusual and interesting obstetrical case you have nursed.

January 25th.—What are the principal requisites in the care of rachitic children?

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