

used to be, and I feel strongly that something should be done to stop the downgrade of nursing in public estimation.

A pretty young private nurse I know tells me she has been deeply incensed of late by the light way men speak of nurses, and some suggestions made to herself—offers of dinners, and a seaside trip! What temptations for young working women, with very little of this world's goods, to run, especially those without parents and family responsibility.

Yours faithfully,
SISTER MARTHA.

THE LIVING-OUT QUESTION.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—Will you discuss the "living-out" question for nurses? It seems impossible to an old matron like myself, but the "living-in" habit has certainly cramped the intelligence of many girls I know. Stultified their mental development, as it were. That has been proved by the sheep-like manner in which they have been intimidated, and failed to organise professionally as the nurses of all other countries have done.

Yours truly,
ONE OF THE LAST GENERATION.

WHAT DO MIDWIVES THINK?

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—Where experts differ, who shall decide? At the last penal session of the Central Midwives Board the Chairman stated that "Chastity and morality were of the first importance in a midwife."

The Chairman of the London Hospital, on the contrary, holds that "it does not matter what her character is if she can do the job." This belief is of some importance because it is upon it that Mr. Sydney Holland justifies his strong support of the registration of midwives, and his hostility to the registration of nurses.

I am quoting from the minutes of evidence taken before the Select Committee on the Registration of Nurses—which Mr. Holland had the opportunity of revising—when I state that he contends "The midwife goes in for a special kind of work. If she is so minded, when she has finished she may go and drink herself stupid if she likes. In her case, as long as she can do her job accurately and well it makes no difference." Some of us who are midwives thought this permission—neither asked for nor desired—insulting, we also wondered if, when we were drinking ourselves stupid, a summons came to another case, what would happen to the patient? But let that pass. The real point at issue is that Mr. Holland supports the registration of midwives, because it does not matter what the midwife's character is, and opposes the registration of nurses because "the value of a nurse depends—and I wish (he said) to emphasise this—on her personal charac-

teristics combined with her practical experience." Now that the Chairman of the Central Midwives Board tells us that character is "of the first importance" in a midwife, which those on "the job" have known for long enough, and further, now that the Central Midwives Board has more than once removed certified midwives from the Roll, not on the ground of technical incompetence, but for faults of character, will Mr. Holland review his position? To the ordinary onlooker it appears untenable.

Yours faithfully,
MARGARET BREAY,
Certificated Nurse and Certified Midwife.

A SHORT CUT.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—I am very glad that, at last, the Chairman of the Central Midwives Board has realized that the certificate of the Central Midwives Board is used as a short cut to district nursing, and commented on its use by a midwife to obtain posts to which she was not entitled. Would it not be possible, in view of the increasing tendency to regard the certificate of the Central Midwives Board as all the testimony required for a woman to engage in general nursing, that a paragraph should be included on this certificate stating that it confers no authority to practice nursing? If something of the sort is not done, I fear a large percentage of district nursing in the country will be performed by certified midwives. For one thing women like to obtain the certificate of the Central Midwives Board because of the legal status and consequent prestige which it confers; and, for another, it is regarded as the Royal Road—short and easy—to practice.

I am,
Dear Madam,
Yours faithfully,
SUPERINTENDENT.

OUR PRIZE COMPETITIONS.

December 13th.—Give your methods of syringing the eye, the ear, and the nose?

December 20th.—How would you control, until arrival of surgeon, bleeding from:

- (1) A varicose ulcer of the leg?
- (2) A stab wound in the thigh?
- (3) A wound between the wrist and elbow?

December 27th.—Mention the symptoms that might indicate the beginning of mastitis. If ice-bags are ordered, what is the proper method of procedure?

OUR CHRISTMAS COMPETITION.

Four Five Shilling Prizes will be awarded in December for the best toys made at a cost of not more than 1s. The toys must be sent to the Editor at 20, Upper Wimpole Street, London, W., with a coupon in the present issue. They will be sent to Superintendent Nurses for distribution amongst the children in workhouse infirmaries.

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