

For a time all went well and the bishop preached gloriously, but gradually there came a falling off—and after one sermon which was mere drivel—Gil Blas went to the bishop saying, "My Lord, the time has come, your last two sermons were totally unworthy of your great fame."

"What," cried the bishop, "you ignorant fool—never in my life have I preached better than I am doing now—my last sermon was my masterpiece. Away with you." The bishop continued to preach and Gil Blas lost his post. I always fully intended to avoid the bishop's mistake.

Yours faithfully,

M. MOLLETT,
Late Matron Royal South Hants
and Southampton Hospital.

Rose Cottage,
Three Cross, Hants.

SCIATICA.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—Thank you for giving us Irish nurses who were not able to be present at the meeting at which Dr. Preston Ball delivered his most instructive lecture on Sciatica, the opportunity of reading it. It throws a new light on many points.

Yours truly,
MEMBER IRISH NURSES' ASSOCIATION
IN LONDON.

THE CONDITIONS OF MIDWIFERY PRACTICE.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—I note in a recent issue that, of the candidates from the best training schools who obtain the certificate of the Central Midwives Board, only a very small proportion propose to practice as midwives. Why? What are the conditions of practice? (1) Hard work—well the right sort of woman does not mind that; (2) infinitesimal pay—many are altruistic enough to help their neighbours in spite of that; (3) conditions of work—supervision, often over done and unsympathetic. That is where the shoe pinches. What kind of women will take up midwifery when, as reported in the JOURNAL last week, they are required by one Local Supervising Authority, to take their disinfecting baths at public baths, and by another to be bathed by the Superintendent Nurse at an isolation hospital, although they have adequate bathing arrangements in their own houses?

The thing is an outrage.

Yours faithfully,

CERTIFIED MIDWIFE,
Who has not notified her intention to
practise.

THE DEMAND FOR BRAILLE BOOKS.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—I wonder if you will allow me a little space in which to talk of a rather important point with regard to the production of Braille books.

There are many kindly sighted people in this country who make these books by hand, and this is also done at various institutions by blind people, particularly at the National Lending Library, so ably managed by Miss Austin.

But the work is necessarily extremely slow, and the entire production of such books does not supply a fraction of the demand for Braille reading matter. I should like, by your courtesy, to suggest that in future Braille books thus produced should be of a special nature, and not, as is usually the case at present, books of general interest which can so much better be made in large quantities by machinery. There are many people who cannot see to read, but have some special pursuit or some special hobby with regard to which they require books that, though of great interest to them, are not of sufficient general interest to warrant their production in quantities. I want to establish a department here, the object of which will be the carrying out of this idea, provided that a sufficient demand and means of supply exist. I shall be very glad if people who are dependent upon Braille for reading will communicate with me, mentioning any particular book of a really special nature which they would like; and if kindly folk who are prepared to make such books will also let me hear from them. The rest will be easy, and I feel sure that great advantages will result.

I was led to this idea by being told by our Chairman, Dr. Ranger (who possesses, I believe, an unique Braille library), that for many years past two ladies have devoted much of their leisure time to making him Braille books on special subjects.

I hope this letter may perhaps have the result of increasing the number of people who engage in the kindly task of making Braille books by hand. The work is quite simple and quite easily learnt, and I am sure that much time which is now spent on comparatively useless occupations could be with great advantage employed for this.

Believe me to be,

Yours faithfully,

C. ARTHUR PEARSON,
Hon. Treasurer.

National Institute for the Blind,
206, Great Portland Street.

OUR PRIZE COMPETITIONS.

April 18th.—How would you apply first aid to the injured in Eye Accidents, if far from a doctor?

April 25th.—Name diseases which may cause obstruction in the oesophagus, and how is it usual to feed such patients?

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[previous page](#)

[next page](#)