

[We are aware that steps have been taken, in the recent re-organisation of the National Union of Trained Nurses, which are calculated to provide a more professional status than when working as the Nurses' Social Union, under the old constitution, but we are not satisfied even now that the constitution defines, as it should do, a sure basis for a National Association of *Trained Nurses*.

Full Members.—The Union admits as full members the persons who according to precedent have a right to the title "trained Nurse"—that is, nurses holding a certificate for three years' training from a recognised hospital or infirmary—so far so good.

Associate Members.—It also admits as Associate Members—

1. Nurses qualified to join as Full Members who prefer to be Associate Members.

2. Nurses not qualified to join as Full Members, but holding the Certificate of a Hospital or Infirmary supported by Voluntary Subscriptions or Public Funds.

3. Nurse Midwives working under trained supervision in a recognised County Nursing Association, or holding the Certificate of such an Association.

4. Nurses in training in a Hospital or Infirmary supported by Voluntary Subscriptions or Public Funds which gives a certificate on completion of training.

Classes 3 and 4 therefore include Village Nurses, who, as Certified Midwives, have legal status under the Midwives Act, but who are not "trained" nurses. Also Probationers in any Hospital or Infirmary.

Associates are persons interested in Health or Social Work, but who are not necessarily qualified for admission as Full Members or Associate Members.

Associates are therefore presumably lay persons with no claim to any professional status whatever.

Vice-Presidents.—All three classes are eligible for this office.

In the Rules it is stated that the Full Members have the *real control of the Union*; yet it is provided that "the *full members and associate members* of a Branch shall elect their Branch Committee from amongst the *full members* of the Union in the area of their Branch, and the Committee so formed shall have power to co-opt *associate members and associates*."

We gather from this that Nurse Midwives and Probationers form in part the electorate of the Branch Committees, and that they, together with lay associates are eligible to, in part, form the Committee by co-option.

Moreover, Presidents of Branches may be lay persons.

Frankly, we think the rules for membership should be simplified. It is hopeless to make the nursing profession realise that a laywoman may be a President of a local Branch and preside as such, but that she is voteless and powerless; or that an associate member does not count when she helps to form the electorate, and may be co-opted on to a Committee of Management. We are not arguing

that all those working and interested in Nursing and Health should not associate together to improve them. We are warmly in favour of such co-operation in Social Service, but we do not honestly feel that a "National Union of Trained Nurses" should include in any capacity others than *trained nurses*. We desire to criticise the constitution before us in a spirit of sympathy, but we do not think as at present constructed it meets the needs of trained Nurses as an organisation through which they have self-governing power, and the right, therefore, to take action on professional questions; nor will it for long satisfy the lay and philanthropic element of the community.

We know the promoters of the National Union of Trained Nurses have the best interests of the Nursing Profession at heart, but they must choose a definite course. The present constitution of the National Union may be expedient, but it is not business.—ED.]

HAPPY NURSES.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—May I too endorse the closing paragraph of "The Scarcity of Nurses" in your issue of January 3rd? It recalls to me a letter received from an intimate friend who was wintering in idleness on the Riviera many years ago, when I was training in a London hospital. It ran: "You are underfed, cold, overworked and badly-paid, yet you say you are happy. Really, you have a most peculiar taste. How *can* you be happy? You *can't*. So there!" But I was.

Yours faithfully,

M. M. G. B.

PERFORMING ANIMALS.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

MADAM,—Many of your readers must be interested in the question of performing animals, and I am glad you support so noble a plea for their adequate protection.

Possibly some of your readers may like to know the facts, if so, they should write to Mr. Sidney Trist, the Editor of the *Animals' Guardian*, 22A, Regent Street, London, S.W., and ask him to send a copy of either his November or December issue. I believe he will do this on receipt of a postcard, giving name and address.

With the facts in their possession your readers cannot fail to arrive at an informed judgment.

I am,

Yours faithfully,

GEORGE SAXON.

London.

OUR PRIZE COMPETITIONS.

January 24th.—Give a short description of the following diseases, with details of their general nursing and management (a) chorea, (b) acute meningitis.

January 31st.—What is a hydatid cyst? Mention the two commonest situations in which they are found, also the surgical emergencies which are likely to occur in connection with them.

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