

You write of people being "shut up" in these institutions. I can give you one instance within my own personal knowledge. A poor old lady who my sister used to visit in one of our provincial old-fashioned workhouse infirmaries, was suffering from rheumatoid arthritis and had been in this place for at least 17 years to our certain knowledge. She was so crippled that she was unable to do anything for herself whatever, and could not hold a book to read or turn pages. The ward windows were high up on the walls, and all that poor soul could see year in year out was a small square patch of sky. The City authorities built a splendid new County Hospital, of which they are justly proud. Our old friend eagerly looked forward to the time when she should be transported to a large airy ward with windows out of which she could catch a glimpse of the outside world. When the time came for the new hospital to be occupied, she and several others in like case were sent away to smaller infirmaries in little country towns, away from the few friends who regularly visited them. I wonder if the City Fathers are as proud of this as they are of their wonderful new hospital?

If you know of anything which I can do to help your crusade in the cause of these helpless folk, I shall be glad to do it. I should have applied for membership of your College before this but am taking my Housekeeping course and intend to apply as soon as I get back to an ordinary post. Meanwhile, will you please send me particulars and the necessary forms.

Thanking you,
Yours sincerely,

DOROTHY E. TINTON.

[We publish Miss Tinton's letter with pleasure and have informed her we shall welcome her help in an organised campaign to release poor sick prisoners from conditions which greatly reflect on our standards of Christianity. We shall need all the help possible to effect reform. But it can and *must be done* if we are to look the Good Samaritan in the face.—Ed.]

KERNELS FROM CORRESPONDENCE.

A *Student Nurse* writes: "The BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING is excluded from the free copies of nursing papers supplied to our library. Sister Tutor disapproves of its policy. Are we a democracy or is the claim humbug? Some of us are dead against degrading our profession. It's difficult enough to keep up standards anyway. As a sex we seem so shallow to what girls used to be."

[We have heard this complaint before—in fact, off and on for the past half-century. It is this tyrannical attitude upon the part of seniors which is the reason for the shortage of well-educated, seriously minded intelligent girls failing to enter the nursing schools in sufficient numbers, and which has been responsible for the advent of the irresponsible Assistant Nurse. We have a long way to travel as a nation to become a democracy. We have got to tackle the snobbery in all classes before we can claim self-respect. Keep on pushing THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING; bring it to the notice of your colleagues, and realise your duty as a citizen.—Ed.]

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THE PRIZE COMPETITION.

We much regret no Paper of sufficient merit has been received for publication.

PRIZE COMPETITION QUESTION FOR SEPTEMBER.

Describe Tetanus and its Nursing Care.

THE MIDWIFE.

THE CENTRAL MIDWIVES BOARD.

We have received a copy of the Report on the Work of the Board for the year ended March 31st, 1942, which is on the same lines as the report of last year.

Restricted space prevents our dealing at length with this valuable report, but we wish to support its plea for publicity on the question concerning the shortage of practising midwives. There is increasing evidence that there are not enough midwives to staff the maternity institutions in the country, and that many more practising midwives are required for attendance on women who have their confinements in their own homes. The decrease in the number of midwives seems now to be reaching such an acute stage that a breakdown in the maternity service is a possibility if adequate remedial action is not taken without delay. There is no lack of women who qualify as midwives, and the number of pupil-midwives now being trained and enrolled as midwives would be sufficient for the maintenance of an adequate supply if all those who completed the whole course of training practised as midwives afterwards. Of the women who were enrolled as midwives in 1940, only 58 per cent. were practising in 1941. The large proportion of the pupil-midwives now being trained are Registered Nurses, and presumably they find that one or other of the various branches of the nursing profession provides them with a more attractive career than the profession of midwifery.

The Board is forced to the conclusion that a permanent solution to this serious problem can only be achieved by a substantial improvement in the general level of remuneration, in the conditions of service, and in public regard for midwives.

In view of the urgent need for action, the Midwives Board hopes that the Rushcliffe Committee, which is considering the salaries question, will submit its recommendations at an early date. Why wait? We recommend the Board to institute reforms without delay. Cash is not the only consideration.

To all practising midwives the Board pays high tribute for the manner in which they had carried on their work in war as in peace. All have been true to the noble traditions of the midwifery profession. All are making an essential and vital contribution to the war effort, a contribution as great as lies within the power of any group of women. All are helping to ensure the future greatness of our country.

SCOTTISH MIDWIVES' EXAMINATION.

The "Second" examination of the Central Midwives' Board for Scotland has just concluded. Of the 106 candidates who appeared for the examination, 98 passed. Of the successful candidates, 18 were trained at the Simpson Maternity Pavilion, Royal Infirmary, Edinburgh; 10 at the Elsie Inglis Memorial Maternity Hospital, Edinburgh; 2 at the Queen's Institute of District Nursing (Scottish Branch); 3 at the Royal Infirmary, Stirling; and 2 at the County and City of Perth Royal Infirmary.

MATERNITY SERVICES IN EDINBURGH.

Agreement has been reached between Edinburgh Corporation and Edinburgh Hospitals regarding maternity services in the city.

The managers of the Royal Infirmary have agreed to provide certified midwives, medical practitioners and obstetricians, generally within the districts of the city, in which the Infirmary at present provides domiciliary midwifery service. In respect of these services the Corporation are to pay the Infirmary an annual sum.

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