

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

Whilst cordially inviting communications upon all subjects for these columns, we wish it to be distinctly understood that we do not in any way hold ourselves responsible for the opinions expressed by our correspondents.

GRENFELL ASSOCIATION OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

66, Victoria Street, London, S.W.1.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR EDITOR,—I have just received the October number of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING and wish to thank you for the wonderful notice you have given to our Association in that issue. Space is so limited in these days that we are deeply indebted to you in giving so large a space to our work. Each year from the free advertisement you give us we receive a large number of orders for our cards, and your generosity in this way is a very real contribution to the Grenfell Mission.—Yours sincerely,

K. SPALDING, Hon. Secretary.

NURSING IN SANATORIA.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

MADAM,—I have had the same experience as your correspondent, "Anxious Aunt." My girl, while in training in a General hospital, wrote to tell me she was to work for three months in a Tuberculosis Sanatorium. Knowing she had a fear of this disease I suggested writing to her Matron about it. She replied that this would be of no use as the parents of one of her fellow-students had objected to their daughter going to the same place and had received the reply that in that case the girl could resign! As both she and my daughter had completed quite half their training, naturally neither of them wished to do this. My girl contracted the disease and though well now is precluded from entering any of the Services and from training in midwifery. Her earning capacity is therefore seriously diminished. The question of compulsion and of compensation in all such cases is surely one that the General Nursing Council should take up with the Ministry of Health.

H. B.

SUGGESTED REGISTRATION OF HOME HELPERS.

9, Alundale Road,
Westbourne, Bournemouth.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—Forgive me for writing at such length to you, but I do feel most indignant on reading in the *Daily Sketch* for October 11th that there should be State-graded Home Helpers; domestic work in all its forms is necessary and valuable for the welfare of our nation; but to suggest "making it a craft something akin to nursing" does indeed subject our Profession to yet another indignity. When are we State Registered Nurses to be allowed to be an outstanding Profession of trained and skilled women in the fight of life and death, and be spared from being mixed up with the unqualified? It is quite time that lay people were made to realise what our fully trained women are for. Many do not even know what our uniform is: I have often been asked what I belong to. And yet it is suggested that "Home Helpers" be registered and entitled to be known as State Registered, to wear distinctive uniform and badge. Yet when R.N. was mentioned at the time of our registration, the Admiralty would not have it. Why then should our prefix be used haphazard by all and sundry? We shall never get the right type of woman for nursing when such suggestions are made by a lay person.

I hope I have not sounded too disagreeable over this matter, and hope others see as I do.—I am, Yours faithfully,

ANNETTE G. YEO, S.R.N. 2288.

THE MIDWIFE.

MORE BIRTHS—FEWER DEATHS—FEWER MARRIAGES.

The highest second quarter birth rate since 1926, and the lowest death rate for the same period since 1933, are recorded in the Registrar-General's Return of Births, Deaths and Marriages in England and Wales for the three months ended June 30th last, just issued—(H.M. Stationery Office, York House, Kingsway, W.C.2; price 6d., post free 7d.).

Live births totalled 180,691, giving a rate of 17.5 per 1,000 of the population; against 16.2 in the June quarter of last year and 15.9 in the same period of 1939. During the five years prior to 1942, the average rate for this period was 15.7.

The rise in the birth rate in the fourth year of war, not only above that of the preceding year but above also the pre-war level, is in contrast to its behaviour during the last war when it fell considerably and continuously throughout. The second quarter rate of 1918—viz., 18.2, had fallen from 18.5, in 1917, and was only 75 per cent. of the preceding peace time experience. The birth rate for the second quarter of 1914 (24.5) was 7.0 higher than the rate for the corresponding quarter of this year.

There were 93,117 boys born and 87,574 girls. This gave a proportion of 1,068 boys to 1,000 girls, compared with an average of 1,055 boys during the 10 preceding second quarters.

NEW LOW RECORD FOR INFANT MORTALITY.

The infant mortality rate was the lowest ever recorded in this period. Totalling 8,028, deaths of babies under 1 year of age represented a rate of 46 per 1,000 live births, or 9 below the average of the 10 preceding second quarters. In the previous four quarters the rates were 50, 42, 48 and 60.

The death rate, based on the mid-1939 population, was 11.0 per 1,000, compared with 11.3 for the second quarter of last year, and an average of 12.0 for the same quarters during the 5 years prior to 1942.

There were 67,457 more births than deaths. The corresponding natural increases in the population in the second quarters of 1940, 1941 and 1942 were 46,989, 7,228, and 50,685 respectively.

Fewer marriages took place. The total of 82,120 was 18,805 below the figure for the corresponding period last year and 19,334 lower than the average for the same quarter during the years 1937-41. The marriage rate of 15.9 was the lowest for this quarter since 1937.

THE CENTRAL MIDWIVES BOARD.

The Examination for the Midwife-Teachers' Certificate Examination takes place on November 25th and 26th.

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