

THE HOLY NATIVITY AND MODERN SCIENCE, OR THE BIBLE AND THE CELL THEORY.

Dr. Jessie B. Simpson's little medical pamphlet on "The Holy Nativity and Modern Science," is a reverent and professional work on the miraculous birth of Our Lord. It cannot offend the most tender conscience, and it is truly remarkable to find science so finely upholding and making more understandable what must, of necessity, remain a mystery of faith.

The cell theory of reproduction has long been accepted, and Dr. Simpson is to be congratulated on her method of tracing out a new line of thought on how divine power activated or "energised" one single female human cell, in order to give this same divine power a human form.

She humbly states that hers is only a partial explanation, but it is very simple and beautiful.

G. M. H.

WHAT TO READ.

MEMOIRS AND BIOGRAPHY.

"Polonaise: The Romance of Chopin." Doris Leslie.

FICTION.

"The Seventh Cross." Anna Seghers.

"The Last of Summer." Kate O'Brien.

"This is the Road." Kathleen Wallace.

"Under which King." Frederick Niven.

"Lord Edward" (Fitzgerald). Magdalen King-Hall.

"The Heart is a Lonely Hunter." Carson McCullers.

"Modern Russian Stories." Translated by Elisabeth Fen.

MISCELLANEOUS.

"A Time for Greatness." Herbert Agar.

"Red Ensign": A History of Convoy. Owen Rutter.

"Four Voyages of Columbus." Alan H. Brodrick.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

The Editor thanks correspondents for communications. She realises how difficult it is for those in hospitals to sign their names to expressions of opinion in opposition to those so emphatically proclaimed by Matrons and senior officials. She thinks, therefore, that anonymous letters on the burning question of the registration of semi-trained nurses by the General Nursing Council for England and Wales, as provided in the Nurses Bill being rapidly thrust through Parliament by the Minister of Health, carry little weight. This is a life-and-death struggle at the moment for safe standards of nursing for the sick of all classes, and those who cannot afford to sacrifice themselves for this great cause by acclaiming their convictions better remain silent.

KERNELS FROM CORRESPONDENCE.

"Never Heard of It."

"It is significant that our Students' Association has discussed and naturally approved the increase of salaries recommended. Let us hope we shall spend a bit on freedom. Discussion on the Nurses Bill, which affects us all in the future, has not been encouraged, and the majority of students here do not even realise legislation is contemplated which is certainly detrimental to our professional status."

[This reminds us of an episode at St. Thomas's Hospital in 1919.

Across the river can be seen the Houses of Parliament, and a young student patient, pointing to the House of Lords, asked his nurse if she realised that the Nurses' Registration Bill was being discussed that day.

"Never heard of it," she replied.—ED.]

THE MIDWIFE.

BIRTHS HEAVIEST FOR FOURTEEN YEARS.

OVER 655,000 REGISTERED IN 1942.

DEATHS LOWEST OF WAR.

The Quarterly Return of the Registrar-General for England and Wales (published by H.M. Stationery Office, York House, Kingsway, W.C.1, price 6d., post free 7d.), shows that the total number of live births registered in the last three months of 1942 was 160,679. This is the highest total for any December quarter since 1926.

For the whole of 1942, the total of live births was 655,075—nearly 68,000 more than in 1941, and the highest yearly total registered since 1928.

The 1942 birth-rate (births registered per 1,000 of the mid-1939 population) was 15.8. This is 1.6 higher than in 1941, and the highest recorded since 1931 (when the rate was the same). The rate for the December quarter (15.4) was the highest since 1930, and 1.8 above the average rate for the same periods in the years 1936 to 1940.

Live births exceeded total deaths (both civilian and non-civilian) registered in England and Wales, last year, by 175,168, compared with 52,048, in 1941. The annual natural increase in population in the years 1936-1940 averaged 99,585.

The stillbirth rate for 1942 (33 per 1,000 total births) was the lowest on record.

FEWER MARRIAGES.

Other figures given in the Registrar-General's Return are as follows:—

Marriages.—The number of marriages and the marriage rate per 1,000 were lower, in 1942, than in either of the three preceding war years, but were, nevertheless, higher than any previously recorded in the past 89 years, with the exception of the boom period of 1919 and 1920, which followed the termination of the last war. There were 19,258 fewer marriages than in 1941, and 102,297 fewer than in 1940, when a new high record was set up. Last year's total 368,252 represented a rate of 17.8 persons married per 1,000 of the population. Marriages during the December quarter numbered 83,392. This was a decrease of 13,866 compared with the same period of 1941 and 19,746 below the average for the same quarters from 1936 to 1940.

Deaths.—The total of 479,907 deaths in England and Wales during 1942 (including those caused by enemy action) was the lowest of the four war years. The decrease on 1941 was over 55,000, and compared with 1940, over 100,000. The death rate of 11.6 per 1,000 of the mid-1939 population was the same as that for 1938 (which was the lowest since 1930). Deaths registered since the December quarter totalled 114,727, the lowest for that period since 1934.

THE CENTRAL MIDWIVES BOARD.

At its Meeting held on April 8, 1943, the elections of Committees for the year took place. The business with which the Board had to deal was of the utmost importance, and every effort will be made to encourage the Roll of Midwives, whose work is of value to the community.

THE "BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING" AND THE "MIDWIFE" SUPPLEMENT, FOUNDED 1888, is the Official Organ of the National Council of Nurses of Great Britain. Price 7s. annually, including postage. Apply, MANAGER, 19, Queen's Gate, London, S.W.7.

THE PRIZE COMPETITION.

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

PRIZE COMPETITION QUESTION FOR MAY.

Describe the treatment of a case of Fracture of the Spine in the mid-dorsal region. What may be the complications of such an injury?

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