

*Sisters.* They made us realise that the Founder of Christianity is the Great Physician of us all. The unimaginative compounders of this deceptive 'Pill' remind one of the cuckoos one hears in the woods at present. Soon they will plant their eggs—and their Act—in the hard-earned nests of others, demanding competence to nourish incompetence even to the life of the former. Seen through the eyes of vision the profession of a Registered Nurse can be the grandest life of all. *But*, in the very heart of England the very people we had hoped to serve are eager to de-grade us. Affectionate greetings to you all, especially to our President who realises that freedom and *honourable conduct* are worth more than cash."

#### Hope Told a Flattering Tale.

*A Student Nurse* writes: "We students are looking forward to the admission of Assistant Nurses in this hospital, hoping they will relieve us of some of the drudgery in the wards."

[Hope told a flattering tale!—Ed.]

#### Student Nurses Hesitate.

*Matron of Small Hospital* writes: "I am finding it more difficult than ever to obtain probationers for a three years' term of training now that Assistant Nurses can register after two years' work. 'What is the difference' they pertinently inquire, or 'I am engaged to be married and don't want to wait three years. I may not have another chance!'"

#### More Domestic Work Required.

*A Sister* writes: "You know what the public are. They have very little knowledge of health conditions, and will not realise until too late the difference between efficiency and pretension. They will go for the cheapest nurse, and it's no good denying it. Registered Nurses are not popular in private houses; servants are jealous, especially of those who are appreciated by the family. Much more domestic work will be required from private nurses after the war as servants will be few, and Assistant Nurses will be expected to give a helping hand. As for wardmaids, where are they coming from? They will naturally all wish to be Assistant Nurses, with rank and high salaries."

[All very true.—Ed.]

#### The Danger of Ignorance.

*State Registered Nurse, or should it be Gamp?* writes:—"I am enclosing to you a copy of leaves from my Diary, kept since I offered my services in this hospital for sick and wounded. The information is not for publication, but to prove to you how serious the ignorance of untrained nurses may be so far as the injured are concerned. There is no doubt that No. 1 lost his arm; and No. 2 his life owing to the necessity for a second abdominal operation, from careless dressing by an untrained nurse who insisted on doing the dressings of 'my patients'. The other cases may mean serious handicaps for the poor fellows who suffered damage. But what hope is there for patients in the future, now that these untrained women have been given legal status? More shameful legislation has never been thrust through Parliament. Some day there will be a *cause célèbre* which will startle the promoters."

[We thank our correspondent for her notes, and sympathise with her indignation.—Ed.]

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## THE MIDWIFE.

### MIDWIVES PROFESSIONALLY REPRESENTED.

At the annual general meeting of the College of Midwives, held in London, the Queen sent a message of encouragement to midwives. She congratulated the College on its new designation and enhanced status. The message stated:—

"I know from your annual report of the strain under which many of you are working due to depleted numbers, and the record of your work during the past year is all the more striking. The profession of midwifery, like its sister profession of nursing, has had to keep pace with the advancement of science and medical knowledge, and now demands of its members a very high standard of brains, as well as character, in keeping with the great responsibilities committed to them.

"This constitutes a challenge—or rather, I would say, a call—to young women seeking a career of real value to the community, and I hope that the response to the call may be commensurate with its need."

The meeting replied thanking the Queen for her message and for her recent broadcast to the women of the nation.

Miss E. M. Pye, in her presidential address, said that only when midwifery was recognised as an honoured profession would they get enough women of the right type. Midwives of the right type were badly needed for the Services.

No work is of greater value to the community than that of skilled midwifery, and it is to be hoped that in the near future we shall find members of this skilled profession as members of the Central Midwives Board, with a voice concerning their own affairs. Why persons with no practical knowledge or skill should thrust themselves into positions of authority over professional workers is one of those matters which personal vanity and love of power must be held responsible.

We are glad to note that the midwives are well represented on Mr. Bevin's National Council for Recruitment of Nurses and Midwives, both Miss Coni and Mrs. F. R. Mitchell, the General Secretary of the College of Midwives, having seats thereon. Expert opinion as to their professional standards are thereby available.

### MIDWIFERY TRAINING.

Terms of application have been sent out from the Ministry of Health for grants in respect of pupils trained at recognised training institutions during the year ended March 31st, 1943.

A committee is at present sitting under the chairmanship of Lord Rushcliffe, to draw up agreed scales of salaries and emoluments for midwives on a national basis, and pupil midwives are included in the classes covered by the terms of reference. It may be anticipated that the recommendations which will be made in due course by that committee will include a unified rate of payment for pupil midwives, and in the light of this and other factors which will arise it will be necessary for the Minister to revise the basis of grants. The grant paid during the current year will, therefore, be the last to be calculated in accordance with the conditions laid down in Memo. 240 M.C.W., dated December, 1940. A further communication will be sent out as soon as possible in regard to future arrangements. Skilled midwives are an urgent necessity throughout the country, but we must not forget that it is very special service that all young women are not temperamentally suitable to render. A skilled midwife needs a very humane disposition and altruistic character. She must also possess "hands"!

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