

under Rule 19 our money is used without our consent. It is high time concerted action was taken to amend such serfdom. I am glad to learn the British College of Nurses is making the position clear to members of Parliament."

Sister-Tutors to the Rescue.

A Sister writes: We Registered Nurses certainly owe Sister-Tutors thanks for taking action concerning the advanced syllabus proposed for Assistant Nurses, and it is satisfactory to learn that the G.N.C. is reconsidering the matter. The proposal is a barefaced attempt upon the part of Borough Council authorities governing hospitals in the country to substitute a two- for a three-years' term of training, as young women in these days object to be bound for a longer period in country hospitals. Many of them are quite open about it: they wish to marry, and say so."

Sister Henrietta of Kimberley.

South African Nurse in England writes: "I was so interested to read of nursing progress in South Africa, and wonder if it would be possible to secure a copy of 'The Life of Sister Henrietta of Kimberley.' I should much like to send it to the new Nursing Council set up under the new Act in South Africa. Can you help me?"

[It is now 30 years since this work was issued, and for some time we have been unable to obtain an additional copy. Have any of our readers one to spare? We feel sure it would be greatly valued by those nurses who have secured a degree of self-government in the Union of South Africa.—ED.]

Books for the Troops.

Naval Nurse on Holiday writes: "The Navy Comforts Fund can do with any amount of books for our troops, but it is very essential they should be worth reading. Dickens, Scott, Trollope, Jane Austen, Conan Doyle, Shakespeare, Browning and Milton, all are appreciated. These works are difficult to buy, and much rubbish is on sale. If any B.J.N. readers have copies of above works to spare the Navy Comforts Fund can distribute them if sent to our British College."

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THE MIDWIFE.

INCREASE IN BIRTH-RATE MAINTAINED.

Fewer Babies Die: New Low Record.

The war-time upward trend in the birth-rate in England and Wales was maintained during the first three months of this year.

The Registrar-General's Return of Births, Deaths and Marriages registered in the quarter ended March 31st, which was issued recently, records a total of 184,145 live births. This represented a rate of 17.9 per 1,000 of the population, the highest first quarter rate since 1926. There were 11,874 more births than in the first three months of 1943, when the rate was 16.9.

Boy babies numbered 94,964, giving a proportion of 1,065 boys to every 1,000 girls. The average for the 10 preceding first quarters was 1,060.

Births registered exceeded deaths by 37,941.

The provisional infant mortality rate, 58 per 1,000 related live births, was 14 below the average for the 10 preceding first quarters, and was the lowest rate on record for this period of the winter.

A death-rate of 14.2, compared with 13.5 during the same period a year ago. From 1938 to 1942 the average rate was 16.2.

Fourteen cases of smallpox were notified during the quarter, three of which were fatal. The three deaths and all but one of the cases were associated with the outbreak of smallpox at Mount Vernon Hospital, Middlesex.

The number of marriages was the second lowest for any quarter since the war. A figure of 62,599, exceeded by only 262 the number in the same period a year ago, when the lowest war-time quarterly total was recorded. The marriages were 12,972 fewer than the average number for the first quarters of the five years prior to 1943, but were 8,338 higher than the corresponding first quarter average for the five years immediately preceding the war.

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