

FREEDOM IS MINE.

*I did not know that life could be
So filled with ceaseless ecstasy.
No watchful eyes; no stifling bars,
Only the stillness and the stars.*

*So dulled was every bruised sense,
This quickened eye is recompense.
My spirit owns each lovely thing.
Freedom is mine. I am a king.*

*Now I can listen without fear,
Because I know that I shall hear
The thrushes in the linden tree,
And the soft laughter of the sea.*

*And on the heather as I lie,
I see the hyacinthine sky.
Watch golden leaves drift down to me,
And find a lost tranquillity.*

*It is not easy to forget.
I am no friend to laughter yet.
—Silent, I hold in mine your hand,
And know that you will understand.*

H. TREVELYAN-THOMSON.

MIDWIFERY ORGANISATION.

The *Manchester Guardian* takes a very intelligent interest in Nursing and Midwifery organisation, and recently published the following communication from Miss N. B. Deane, Vice-Chairman of Council of the College of Midwives, matron of the Bristol Maternity Hospital.

MIDWIVES.

To the Editor of the *Manchester Guardian*.

"SIR,—The number of practising midwives now available is insufficient to meet the demand. Because of this, the College of Midwives recently broadcast an appeal for retired midwives to return to practice, even if only for part-time or temporary service.

However good the response to this appeal may be, it will only provide very slight and temporary relief, and it will in no way meet the immediate need for 1,000 practising midwives, and still less the demand for the further 1,000 needed to give effect to the Rushcliffe Committee's recommendations on conditions of service.

We must look to the newly qualified women to build up an adequate service for the future. Far too many of these leave the profession after a short period in it, and unless immediate steps are taken to stem this withdrawal the nation's maternity services cannot be maintained at a satisfactory level.

The newly qualified women have found that the conditions of service and prospects for midwives compare very unfavourably with those for other members of the public health staffs with whom they have been working, and they are not prepared to remain in a profession which does not provide reasonable prospects of promotion, salaries commensurate with the responsibilities undertaken, suitable housing, and the necessary transport.

We in the midwifery profession are well aware of this situation and the reasons for it, but are quite unable to provide the remedy. It can only be provided by immediate Government action designed to bring about the reorganisation of the maternity services on the lines recommended by the College of Midwives.

An adequate number of well-trained midwives is vital to the community. They are being trained—and lost. If the mothers of the country are not to suffer the remedy must be applied now."

RECOGNITION BY THE MIDWIVES BOARD.

Now that a new Chairman is to be appointed to the Midwives Board, it is to be hoped that the exclusion of professional representation will cease and the Midwives be given power to nominate direct representatives into their Governing Body. It is high time the antiquated policy of the recent Chairman, Sir Comyns Berkeley, was superseded by a more liberal system of representation of the professional workers—the midwives. Their work is invaluable in the evolution of a nation, and they should be given power to exercise it.

SHORTAGE OF MEDICINE BOTTLES.

Chemists report that they are finding themselves increasingly handicapped in their dispensing work by the shortage of medicine bottles.

The Board of Trade and the Ministry of Health are jointly doing their best to secure priority for the production of new medicine bottles, but the public are urged to co-operate by returning empty bottles to doctors or chemists.

Ways in which the public can co-operate in helping to overcome this shortage of medicine bottles are:—

- (1) By taking a clean bottle to the doctor or chemist when requiring medicine; and
- (2) By returning the bottle when no further medicine is needed.

A CONCENTRATED VITAMIN FOOD.

We much regret that the prices of Vimaltol in our February issue were announced as 3s. and 5s., and should have been 3s. and 5s. 6d., the 6d., by some unexplainable accident, having been dropped at the works. Vimaltol is a concentrated, protective vitamin food with a delightfully sweet orange flavour which all children love. It provides nutritive elements for increasing strength and weight, and fortifying resistance against coughs, colds and other ailments.

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