

practitioners to be appointed by the British Medical Association, (e) one registered medical practitioner to be appointed by the Medico-Psychological Association, and (f) seven registered nurses, to be elected as the direct representatives of the registered nurses. A council so constituted cannot accurately be described as only representing the nurses, and the writer of the paragraph must either have criticized a bill which he has not read, or must have purposely designed it to misinform your readers.

In the clause relating to the constitution of the General Council in the Scottish bill, the only medical practitioners specifically mentioned are two medical superintendents appointed by the Secretary for Scotland, although presumably the "persons" to be nominated by some of the bodies named in the bill will be medical practitioners. The British Medical Association is entirely excluded from representation under this bill, nomination being placed in the hands of academic bodies, some of which have no expert knowledge whatever of nursing education.

Again, the writer of the paragraph states, "The Scottish Bill . . . admits . . . mental nurses to a special register; this Lord Amptill's bill does not do."

Lord Amptill's bill provides for the registration of mental nurses in the following clause: "There shall be a nurses' register comprising . . . (2) A supplementary register of asylum trained nurses to be called the 'Mental Nurses' Register,'" etc.

This clause disproves the statement made by your Scottish correspondent that Lord Amptill's bill does not admit mental nurses to a special register.

Another misleading statement in the paragraph above referred to is that "the registration fee in the Scottish bill is 2 guineas, while in the English bill it is 5 guineas." This is incorrect. The registration fee provided for in each bill is 2 guineas, but Lord Amptill's bill makes provision for a further fee "not to exceed the sum of 3 guineas for examination."

Lord Amptill's bill provides for one portal of admission to the nursing profession, that is, after training in the wards of hospitals approved by the Council and passing "such examination as the Council may prescribe."

The Scottish bill requires evidence of training "in the wards of a hospital or of hospitals, or of an institution approved of by the Council." No independent test of efficiency is imposed.

But though the Scottish bill provides for no uniform, central, independent examination, and proposes to register nurses upon their hospital certificates, and for this purpose recognizes nurses trained in fever hospitals only, it demands reciprocity of registration in the United Kingdom—reciprocity of professional and economic advantages.

Lastly, your correspondent says: "It will be unfortunate if some understanding is not come to by the promoters of the several bills." I may say, therefore, that a very substantial understanding in favour of one bill has been arrived at in conference between the delegates of this Society, the Royal British Nurses' Association, the Irish Nurses' Association, and Sir William Macewen, representing the views of the newly-formed Scottish Nurses' Association, of which he is President, the object of which is to support a State registration of nurses by a single portal system for the United Kingdom after having passed a State examination conducted under the auspices of a central board. The only society promoting a Nurses' Registration Bill which is in opposition to this fundamental principle of registration is thus the Association for the Promotion of the Registration of Nurses in Scotland, of which Lord Inverclyde is President, and Dr. Mackintosh, Medical Superintendent of the Western Infirmary, Glasgow, Honorary Secretary.—I am, etc.,

ETHEL GORDON FENWICK,

Honorary Secretary, Society for the State Registration of
London, W., Oct. 19th. Trained Nurses.

THE WORLD OF MEDICAL BOOKS.

SIR,—Is it not true that we appear to be living in the age of the "literary surgeon and the picture book doctor"? Any one who has any knowledge of the times cannot fail to think so. Even the modern works on clinical medicine, in very many instances unlike the works of Graves, tend to be largely collections of laboratory methods, very valuable, no doubt, but not filling the place of the older

clinical works. The clinical phenomena associated with many morbid processes are not discussed at all in many books, and little help can be gained from their study in the elucidation of many disease problems. Even in treatment, how often do we see the words "suitable diet" written, when the actual diet required is not stated. There also seems less attention paid by many writers to the study and actual relief by treatment, of the discomforts of the dying patient, such as were dwelt upon by the late Hilton Fagge. We are all also well aware of the enormous amount of vain repetition which occur in medical works in these days.

Let us hope that the future medical world will be productive of fewer novelistic writers and artists and many more clinical writers of the old stamp.—I am, etc.,

October 5th.

"OMEGA."

MEDICAL TEACHING.

SIR,—The teaching of medicine is an annual topic of discussion, and, notwithstanding all the able addresses on the subject and the correspondence in the JOURNAL, little improvement is apparent, but rather, I should say, the reverse. I have carefully watched for years the number of entries for medical examinations and compared them with the passes—the only way of arriving at an opinion of the quality of the teaching for examinations—and this does not speak well for teaching. The most recent that I have examined is that for the first part of the Cambridge D.P.H. examinations, and here, if we compare the passes with the failures, we may safely say that teaching for that examination has collapsed, one-third only of the candidates presented having scraped through. Now, this is a serious condition—so serious that some system must be adopted whereby aspirants to degrees may be informed of the schools where they may have education likely to fit them for an examination.

We may take for granted in the Cambridge examination that all who presented themselves were men of average ability, seeing they had already obtained a qualification of some kind; but, leaving their first school, they had been unfortunate in choosing a public health school where the teachers had been unable to direct their studies so as to qualify them for such an examination. To many of them the failure is serious, as they, being young, can ill afford the money and the time to prepare for another examination. If Cambridge hopes to continue as an examining body they must of necessity adopt some means of advising the aspirants for their D.P.H. where they may find a suitable school, and they must after each examination, in publishing the results, name the schools at which their successful candidates were educated. This might be adopted by other schools, and naturally teachers would be spurred to improve their system of teaching.—I am, etc.,

October 10th.

PRO BONO PUBLICO.

PS.—I am assuming, of course, that the examination taken here as an example was not outrageous in its requirements.

EXHUMATION AFTER FIVE CENTURIES.

SIR,—On the 7th of this month I had to examine some human remains recently disinterred in this town after being undisturbed for some five hundred years.

The body was wrapped in several layers of cerecloth, the whole being enclosed in a lead coffin, moulded to the shape of the body, and absolutely airtight. When first found the lead covering was opened and the body removed, the cerecloth was also partially opened, and the remains reburied in a rough wooden case. In this manner air and moisture had been admitted to the corpse some three weeks before, acting on an order from the Home Office, I had a chance of examining it. At the inspection, which was needed to determine the sex—rumours being current that the body was that of the "Fair Maid of Kent"—the following appearances struck me as being of some interest in view of the length of time since burial, and as showing how marvellously preserved a body may be when hermetically sealed even after the lapse of several centuries.

On removing the wrappings, which were apparently of linen heavily charged with beeswax, the body was seen quite naked, the arms straight down the sides, the right foot crossed over the left, both feet pointing to the left.