

of the correspondents in question. We should be by no means surprised if this proved to be the case.

Unfortunately, there are abundant proofs that, even at the present day, despite the immense advances which have been made in raising the profession of Nursing from the low level it formerly occupied, there are still a very considerable number of women who obtain work on the strength of such worthless imitations. "F R.C.S." was able to gauge the value of this Nursing certificate; but the majority of the public would probably have accepted the diploma as a matter of course, and as not only genuine, but as a valuable recommendation of the "Nurse's" abilities.

As we have frequently said, it represents a real danger to the sick that those who are entrusted with their care should, perhaps, possess neither the necessary knowledge nor character for such duties. The public have the matter very much in their own hands now, and they have only themselves to blame if they accept the services of an inefficient worker. They have the Register of the Royal British Nurses' Association; they have a large body of registered—that is to say, thoroughly trained—Hospital Nurses from whom they can select the attendant they require. If then they take a quack Nurse with a bogus diploma, destitute of knowledge or experience, they have only themselves to thank if they find that danger ensues from entrusting details of the highest importance to such inefficient hands. We are glad to know that the leaders of the medical profession, at any rate, are sufficiently alive to the dangers to which their patients are exposed, and that, therefore, they have accorded their cordial support to the Registered Nurses' Society, the outward and visible protest against the old system.

Events are moving rapidly towards the compulsory Registration of Nurses, and legislation to this end may perhaps be regarded as within the field of practical politics. Even now, however, as we have said, there is a sufficient measure of protection for the sick in the voluntary registration scheme of the Royal British Nurses' Association. But it appears to us that the fact of such bogus diplomas and quack Nurses being still existent should incite trained Nurses, for their own protection, as well as for the benefit of their calling, to take steps to remove such an obvious disgrace to their profession. They can do nothing except by union and concerted action. They have the opportunity of securing both by becoming registered members of the Association. Formerly, when the Association was beset by opponents, and subject to misrepresentation and abuse, many Nurses felt afraid to join its ranks and take part in its great work. Now that it is a powerful and Chartered Corporation, they have not this excuse; and if they desire to be distinguished from the quack Nurses

who compete with them in their daily work, and to purify their profession from such unworthy pseudo-members, they should certainly do all in their power to strengthen the hands of the progressive party in the Nursing world.

MEDICAL WOMEN.

It is reported that a strange fatality has attended those ladies who last year commenced their medical studies at Johns Hopkins University; and this is being used to point the moral that, at other American seats of learning, it will be a mistake to permit the co-education of men and women in the medical sciences. At the end of one short session—and their first—it was found that no less than one-third of the lady students were engaged to be married. The reporter concludes from this that their education will be abruptly ended, and draws the moral, not unnaturally, that, at this rate and percentage, the commencement of the fourth year of study will see no lady students appear in their places—all having entered the holy estate of Matrimony by the termination of their third year's course. This result has not yet followed the study of medicine by women in this country, and the reason, probably, is that the method of co-education, as it is termed in America, has not been followed here—medical women, in London, having their own School and Hospital.

PATHOLOGICAL NOVELS.

Verily the English take their pleasures sadly, and a new example of the truth is supplied by the tendency of the modern novel. From the earliest times, stories have been written with a more or less obvious moral, and the 18th century teemed with novels "written with a purpose." Our times have improved upon the latter, by the production of works of fiction in which the mental condition of the hero or heroine are subjected to elaborate, not to say wearisome, dissection. Now we have gone a step farther, and advanced from psychology into pathology. Microbes have made their appearance in the novel of to-day, and if they do not multiply, as is their custom, and choke the novelist, we shall probably find that anti-septic remedies will be recommended to be consumed while reading these effusions in order to protect the reader against the germs with which they are made to teem. The latest, and perhaps the nastiest, effort of this class of fiction is to cause the destruction of all the objectionable persons in the novel by the means of a dietary supplied by the villain of the piece, and in which he had carefully placed microbes of cholera and similar complaints. Probably, the novelist imagines that these microbes grow at large, and are always to be found by earnest inquirers, all ready for the destruction of human kind. If he had the slightest idea as to the source from which such microbes are first derived, and the medium upon which they are cultivated, probably even he would hesitate to employ, for the purposes of fiction, such a particularly nasty pathological process. Still, the development of the modern novel is a fearful and a wonderful thing; and if microbes are to be cultivated and employed, as necessity may arise, to suit the purposes of the piece, quarantine and disinfection will, probably, become details quite unnecessary or impossible of execution.

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