

successfully over many difficult places. We have been led to make these remarks by reading in a contemporary the sensations experienced by a patient in a London hospital while "waiting the knife" before an operation for "excision of the tongue," which has appeared in these columns, and which puts before the reader, in graphic language, the condition of mind of the "tongue case," and the individuality which all of us are, to some extent, in danger of forgetting in the rush of work, and professional interests.

#### SIX MONTHS' EXPERIENCE.

IT would seem from a paragraph which has recently appeared in the *African Critic*, that the royal road to learning nursing has been discovered. A South African lady has, we are told, recently passed through a course of six months' "hard study" at the British Hospital, and has "passed all her examinations with flying colours." She now holds "all her certificates," which include those for surgical nursing, massage, the "Nauheim" treatment for heart troubles, and in addition to obtaining these, which would average a certificate for every two months' work, the lady has put in a course of midwifery—for which training in the case of ordinary mortals, a course of three months is all too short—and returns to South Africa a "fully qualified midwife." We wonder if there are other hospitals which train and certificate probationers, in all these branches of nursing, or indeed in any one branch, in a corresponding period of time.

#### A WISE PRECAUTION.

THE action brought against a medical man by his wife, on the alleged ground of impropriety of conduct with his lady patients, points out indisputably, that it is wisdom on the part of gynæcologists to arrange for the services of female attendants, preferably trained nurses, in their consulting rooms. Besides the fact that, in the fitness of things, if the husband or some other friend of the patient is not present, this commends itself as the proper course to adopt, it is highly advisable for the protection of medical men themselves, whose reputation may be quite unjustifiably attacked, but who have no means of disproving charges brought against them unless a third person is present on such occasions.

This plan was adopted twenty years ago, in Paris, by a noted specialist, and the wisdom and propriety of it must be apparent. It is obvious that the patient will prefer to be placed in the proper position, and have the support of the presence of one of her own sex during a trying interview, and only by such means can a medical man defend himself from the suspicions, may be, of a jealous wife, or the charges of hysterical patients, incurred during the discharge of his duty.

### Medical Matters.

#### GALL STONES.



ONE of the most painful conditions connected with the liver is undoubtedly the formation of stones in the gall bladder. These small or large calculi are supposed to be formed by the drying up of fluid bile, and the deposit from it of the crystals which it contains. They are productive of danger to the patient in two ways. A stone may pass into the small duct which conveys the bile from the gall bladder into the bowel, and thus may cause not only extreme pain by its pressure, and at the same time jaundice from the retention of the bile, but may also ulcerate through the canal, and so set up fatal peritonitis. Then again, the stones in the bladder may cause such pressure and distention upon its walls as to bring about the same result. Fortunately, however, the chief danger is that of constantly recurring attacks of colic. For many years, medicinal treatment was wholly relied upon for the cure of this complaint, and there is no doubt that by the use of olive oil in large quantities, and by various other drugs, stones can be softened and even made so small that they can pass away into the bowel. During the last few years, surgery has successfully stepped in to relieve and cure cases in which danger is extreme, and for which medicinal methods are useless. The operation is a difficult, but on the whole has been a very successful one, and the latest series of cases with which we are acquainted show a mortality of less than six per cent. The operation consists of opening the abdominal cavity, finding and drawing the gall-bladder to the surface, opening its

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