

expressed surprise at some of the statements therein put forward.

The *Nursing Record* has doubtless a large circulation, not only in this country, but also throughout the whole Nursing world, and it is especially read by those who have neither time for deep study, nor the wherewithal to possess themselves of medical literature. It may be the magazine is the only professional literature that is perused by the great majority of Nurses. It therefore seems to me that, before contributing to such a publication, writers should carefully study the subject to which they contribute; and should always be sure that what they state as facts are facts; and should also take care that these facts are clearly defined in *their* minds before they attempt to impart them to others. The responsibility is no light one, and ought carefully to be considered before being undertaken.

With reference to the article, "Puerperal Convulsions," the writer first commits an inaccuracy by saying:—"Puerperal convulsions are not fatal at or after labour." This is not the case, but on the contrary, the mortality from eclampsia in cases occurring before and during labour is twice as great as that occurring in cases after labour.

But to get to the more vital part of the article. I see the startling assertion:—"Urea in the blood is injurious to health." Surely one of the first rudiments of physiology is the composition of the blood, and in any publication pretending to teach this branch of science we find under the above heading that "Urea is a normal constituent of blood plasma."

That urea is the product of a retrograde metabolism is true, and that as a waste product it is in the blood is also true. The blood is a medium for getting rid of waste products from the tissues. Since the blood is always bathing the tissues, and since the tissues are always undergoing waste, and since again urea is one of the waste products of these tissues, it naturally follows that urea shall always be in the blood; and this is the case.

To sum up: urea, as a waste product, is always present in the blood, it being in this way taken from the tissues to the kidneys, through which it is eliminated from the system.

Again, I read, "Albumen in the blood produces disease and death from the blood disease, called albuminuria." This statement is most misleading and inaccurate. There is no disease known as albuminuria; albuminuria means albumen in the *urine*. Albumen is a large and constant constituent of blood, both of blood plasma and of blood cells; and it is through this albumen—derived from food—that the tissues of the body are nourished and built up.

In the last paragraph of the article in question it is stated concerning albumen:—"Nature, from some cause or other, has more of it on her hands than she wants, and if the kidneys cannot dispose of it all, a portion gets absorbed into the blood, and that dire disease, albuminuria, results, and every Nurse knows convulsions are the result of it."

It is to be sincerely hoped that every Nurse does not know what is contained in the above paragraph.

(1) It is not the function of the kidneys "to dispose of" albumen, normal urine containing none.

(2) Albuminuria is never the result of absorption of albumen by the blood from the kidneys.

(3) Uræmic convulsions are not produced by the absorption of albumen by the blood from the kidneys; neither are they produced by the temporary retention of urine sometimes present in labour.

The writer seems to have got hopelessly mixed up in her peregrinations between urea and albumen.

An elementary description of the part played by the blood in the human economy, also an outline on the subjects albumen and urea, will be found in "Animal Physiology," by Vincent T. Murché, published by Blackie and Son, price one shilling and sixpence.—Yours truly, E. F. M.

Sussex County Hospital,  
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### CHRISTMAS DAY AT ST. THOMAS'S HOSPITAL.

BY MARY TREGARTHEN.

THE months go by so rapidly, I can scarcely realize it is nearly a year ago since I spent my Christmas in St. Thomas's Hospital. I had been a patient in the Hospital for some months previously, and for a short time had been in the Alexandra Ward, but as circumstances had necessitated my removal from there to another part of the Hospital, it was a pleasant surprise to me to receive an invitation from the Sister of the Alexandra Ward, to be present at their entertainment on Christmas Day. About four o'clock I was wheeled in a chair to the Ward, and as I entered such a radiant vision met my eyes, it seemed to me like fairyland. Numbers of Chinese lanterns, suspended from every available gas-jet, lent a glowing light to the whole scene, and at the further end of the Ward the words: "Comfort ye, comfort ye, oh, my people!" printed in large white letters on red cloth, seemed

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)