

those in authority in institutions where this abuse exists. One of my fellow probationers was removed by her mother, when she learned the sort of work she had to do.

I am, yours truly,  
A PROBATIONER.

#### HOSPITAL NOVELS.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—I have read the "Hospital Novel" referred to in your last issue, and while it is certainly much superior in my judgment, both as to style and standards, to that dealing with a cottage hospital, which left an exceedingly nasty taste in the mouth, I think the moral of this one is bad also, for it makes heroes and heroines of young people—both nurses and doctors—who are far from that, but undisciplined and deceitful. The nurses, at any rate, are deliberately breaking rules which they have undertaken to keep, and the house staff unwritten laws which they know, as honourable men, they ought to observe. Why then glorify them and excite sympathy for them, and belittle those in authority who are conscientiously endeavouring to do their duty?

What may be the outcome of this deception is to be seen in the case of one of the characters, who is ruined by a member of the house staff of the hospital concerned, and exposure is only avoided by her timely death from typhus.

Will not someone write a picture of hospital life for us, depicting the matrons and sisters whom many of us have known, women whom it has been an honour to serve under, who have had a profound influence on our lives subsequently, to whom we turned in our early days in hospital for instruction and for support in emergencies, and never in vain, who are still to us embodiments of all that a trained nurse should be, as we tread the difficult way, made easier by the fact that their footsteps have gone before, and their example heartens and stimulates us? Most nurses could testify to inspiration received in this way, but it is the fashion for the novelist to decry those in authority, and to give—not to us who know—but to the general public, a quite erroneous impression thereby.

I am, dear Madam,  
Yours faithfully,  
STAFF NURSE.

P.S.—I am not a "Matron's spy."

#### ECHOES FROM THE PAST.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—An incident referred to by Miss Beatrice Kent in a recent issue, showing the lengths to which tyranny may be carried without the protection of State Registration may be followed up by the following:—Somewhat over twenty years ago, in a certain Scottish Hospital Training School for Nurses, probationers had to train and qualify without lectures, because forsooth the senior surgeon disapproved of lectures

for nurses. The matron—a woman of education and in most things of liberality of mind—actually acted in concert, and supported this person's intolerance and ignorance. Lectures the nurses had, and good ones, too, from the house-surgeons, but they were unauthorised, and although not prohibited, were not encouraged by the matron, who never countenanced them by her presence.

The surgeon in question did his operations and dressings under the Lister Carbolic Spray, which by that time had been discarded by its great surgeon-inventor. Instead of putting on an overall, clean apron, or even setting to work in his shirt sleeves, an old jacket was donned and the collar carefully turned up to protect his own linen. Lastly I may mention that a favourite pastime of this surgeon was to swear at the nurses or at least at those who would be sworn at!

Could this have happened under Registration? I say no.

I am, yours truly,  
TRUTH IS STRANGER THAN FICTION.

#### REPLIES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

*District Nurse.*—A midwife who has been in attendance upon a patient suffering from any illness supposed to be infectious is not allowed by the rules of the Central Midwives Board to attend another labour until she herself, her instruments, and her appliances, have been disinfected to the satisfaction of the Local Supervising Authority. It therefore devolves upon the committee by whom she is employed to make provision for the proper care of any maternity cases which may occur while she is infected. You are not a midwife, but are undertaking her work. The Central Midwives Board has therefore no jurisdiction over you, but unquestionably the same course should be pursued in the interest of the patients.

#### OUR PRIZE COMPETITIONS.

*April 19th.*—What are the dangers (a) to the mother, (b) to the child, in a case where there is a purulent vaginal discharge at the commencement of labour.

*April 26th.*—Mention some of the uses of the skin, its condition in health, and some prominent features characteristic of disease.

#### THE SILVER JUBILEE NUMBER.

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On April 19th we shall publish the Silver Jubilee Number, and we invite our readers' assistance in making this a notable event. We shall hope for whole-hearted support in spreading THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING far and wide. Let every reader who appreciates what this Journal has done for the profession throughout the world make it her duty to bring its work to the notice of her colleagues by filling in the order form for extra copies, to be found on page xii of our advertisement pages, and returning it to the manager, so that we may estimate how many thousands of extra journals will be required.

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