

the old Dowager, who has thus better opportunities of carrying out her malicious plot of substituting a girl baby should an heir be born to the Rajah.

"A dark, vaulted room without windows, bare stone walls, innocent of paint, pictures, or any of those things that mark the habitation of civilised races, such was the lying-in chamber of generations of Ranees belonging to the Kalinga dynasty. A hideous idol looked down upon the scene. The air was heavy with various scents, the white jasmine flower strung together on a thick rope and hung round the idol's neck. A dozen or more women wrapped in blue sarees were grouped round the room as far as possible from the divan. The sun went down and twilight drew on with leaping steps common to the tropics. In turn the women crept out from the room to seek the welcome coffee, returning with the soft, noiseless tread of bare feet. Hanama was the only person who refused to go. Not for one second would she leave her kinswoman and mistress. Every now and then she cracked her knuckles over the Ranee to ward off the evil spirits. At other times the soft hand massaged the slender figure or gently patted the shoulder of the restless patient as though to induce sleep and ease. Suddenly an exclamation fell from the lips of the midwife." A number of sharp eyes keen with curiosity endeavoured to pierce the darkness. Foremost in the crowd was the Dowager Ranee. "Give me the child, give me the child; it is my right to be the first to hold the Rajah's third daughter in my arms."

Suddenly, like a flash of lightning, a brilliant beam of light shot out in the pitchy darkness and was focussed upon the child lying upon the divan.

"A boy! a boy! a beautiful boy! Ranee, rejoice! You have borne your husband a son and heir!" cried a woman's voice. The torch was suddenly extinguished, and in that moment the child completely disappeared. How Dinah Ellingham gained admittance to the chamber, and who took the child, and how the Dowager was found to be holding a girl baby in her arms makes very good reading, and we advise every one who can to solve the mystery for themselves.

H. H.

COMING EVENTS.

December 14th.—Irish Nursing Board (approved by the Royal College of Surgeons): A Public Meeting will be held in the Royal College of Surgeons, St. Stephen's Green, Dublin, at 4.30 p.m. Chairman, Dr. O'Carroll, President Royal College of Physicians. Principal speaker, The Hon. Albinia Brodrick.

December 15th.—Meeting of the Grand Council of the National Council of Trained Nurses of Great Britain and Ireland, 431, Oxford Street, London, W. 4 p.m.

December 15th.—First London General Hospital, Camberwell, S.E. 5. Exhibition and Sale of Patients' Work. 2.30 p.m.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

Whilst cordially inviting communications upon all subjects for these columns, we wish it to be distinctly understood that we do not in ANY WAY hold ourselves responsible for the opinions expressed by our correspondents.

GIVE THEM JUSTICE!

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—I would like to congratulate "C. B. M." upon the aptness of her contribution, "Give Them Justice." If there is any likelihood of this being reprinted, I would like to purchase some copies. If there is no such intention I should be glad to reprint the poem upon some Christmas cards to send to quite a lot of nurses.

Faithfully yours,

FLORENCE RUSSELL GREEN.

86, Hagley Road,
Edgbaston, Birmingham.

COERCION MUST BE STOPPED.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—A letter from a nurse of standing has reached us to-day containing the following statement:—

"The College of Nursing keeps bothering me. The last thing is a registered letter demanding £1 is., or I cannot join. I do not intend to join."

We have received many complaints of this nature. Great pressure has been brought to bear to induce nurses to join, and many have been frightened into doing so, because they thought they would otherwise have to pass an examination before getting on to the State Register. This erroneous impression should be removed.

I am, yours faithfully,

E. L. C. EDEN.

National Union of Trained Nurses.

COLLEGE CAMOUFLAGE.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—I note that, according to the Report of a Meeting held under the auspices of the College of Nursing, Ltd., a medical officer who took the chair advised the nurses present to organise under the College scheme and so "constitute a sort of Trade Union of their own."

It seems to me that before medical men lend their imagination to add to the already too extensive array of College camouflage they should make themselves conversant with facts. On what logical ground could the College claim to be regarded as a Nurses' Trade Union? This Admirable Crichton of the nursing profession in its time is to play many parts, if we believe all the prophecies of its promoters.

The latest suggestion appears to have passed without criticism from the lecturer or any nurse present at the Meeting, but surely the millennium must indeed be in sight when one body can hope to combine in itself the functions of a Central Registration Authority and those of a Trade Union. Hitherto I have understood that such a Union must be composed of members of the rank

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