

terest to my young Nursing readers. The patient was a young primipara, in very delicate health, who had suffered from childhood from incontinence, the sequel of a fever. The delivery was effected by forceps, and the woman sustained very severe perinæal injury. When sufficiently recovered she was placed under surgical treatment; the Surgeon, a man of first eminence, wrote me for particulars as to her labour, and asking if we were aware that she was suffering from vesico-vaginal fistula, and that the injury was inflicted at the time of labour. I sent the required particulars, and said we were not aware that there was any other lesion than the perinæal; that Mrs. T— suffered from incontinence of urine beforehand, and we did not regard that symptom as having anything to do with her labour. Neither the patient nor her friends mentioned this fact to the Surgeon, and hence he was led to believe it was a *recent* affliction. Here we had a constitutional malady, at once simulating and marking a co-existing and serious lesion which those in attendance had overlooked.

You may ask, how are we to distinguish between infirmity or lesion? The diagnosis is made in this wise: The catheter is passed to make sure that the bladder is completely evacuated, and then milk is injected into it; if the fluid returns per vaginam, we know that fistula exists; if by the meatus, we know that it does not.

I have dwelt somewhat tediously, I fear, upon this subject, but to my mind it is one of much interest in Obstetric Nursing.

(To be continued.)

### PRIZE ESSAY COMPETITION.—XXII.

Give your idea of what Obedience should consist of in the offices of a Probationer, a fully Trained Nurse, a Sister, and a Matron respectively.

BY MRS. J. G. TAYLOR  
(Matron, Victoria Hospital, Hull).

WE are informed in an old proverb—and I confess to belief in many old sayings that have been handed down to us for so many generations of wisecracks—that "Self-preservation is the first law of nature," and my own experience has always proved to me the truth of this particular proverb, for in cases of extreme danger, such as fire, shipwreck, panic of any kind, the greatest effort is generally made on

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one's own behalf. All others may perish, if *we* are safe. Another saying I remember, and one with which I sympathise, as I feel sure were it my case there would be a similar proof of the correctness of it—

"He that fights and runs away  
Will live to fight another day."

Besides this I have noticed that the study of "self" in any form—judging from the vast amount of thought and time devoted to it—must be a most interesting and thoroughly enjoyable one; a science so extremely engrossing and fascinating to its devotees that they may be considered as specialists in a manner—so deep, so absorbing, so prolific in reward it is that it frequently unfits the mind of the finished student, rendering it incapable of comprehending any other branch of study. It renders its votaries deaf to the voice of conscience, triumphs over obstacles, overcomes all scruples, grasping every opportunity of self-aggrandisement with an enthusiasm that would be commendable if bestowed on a worthier object. The love of self, increasing with years, finds only in the end that the shadow has been pursued for the substance. The idol of self is shattered at last, and with despair he sees his cherished hopes sink into nothing; his life-long effort with self only for its object appears, when too late, in its true light; that which he has grown to love with the passion of a miser can only now benefit those who will hardly give a passing sigh to his memory. Sometimes, however, this love of self is broken down by some heavy bereavement, some great sorrow that brings him to the dust and ashes of despair, from the depths of which, under its chastening influence, he awakes from the lethargy which has oppressed him, and fortunately in time sees the worthlessness of the object of such tender care. The student of "self" then willingly lays down his arms and enters the ranks of labourers in the field of humanity. He begins to think of those around him who have been too long neglected. If such be the case, in ministering to the wants of his fellow-creatures he soon realises more true happiness than in his hitherto selfish existence he could have deemed possible. He now obeys the general impulse implanted by Nature in all, and the voice of conscience amply rewards him.

This may appear far away from the subject under consideration, but as it is on Hospital matters, and written to those whose lives must— from their choice of a profession—be, it is hoped,

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