

## WHAT TO READ.

## MEMOIRS AND BIOGRAPHY.

"Memory Hold-the-Door." By John Buchan (Lord Tweedsmuir).

"A Cavalier in China." Col. A. W. S. Wingate, C.M.G.

"Under Four Tudors." Matthew Parker, Archbishop of Canterbury.

"An Epic of the Gestapo." Sir Paul Dukes.

## FICTION.

"Fame is the Spur." Howard Spring.

"Southern Saga." Roy Connolly.

"As Husband and Wife." Sonia Deane.

"Moment in Peking." Lin Yutang.

"The Camelion's Dish." Roland Pertwee.

"World's End." Upton Sinclair.

"The Stone of Chastity." Margery Sharp.

## HISTORY.

"The Navy in Action." Taffrail (Captain Taprell Dorling).

## 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.*

## THE CONSCRIPTION OF NURSES.

Horseferry House,  
(East or West Entrance),  
Horseferry Road,  
Westminster,  
London, S.W.1.

DEAR SIR (MADAM),

August 13th, 1940.

My attention has been drawn to a paragraph appearing in the current issue of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING, where I am reported to have said, "We must conscript nurses; the position is nothing short of a tragedy." The report adds that I expressed the intention of urging the Minister of Health "to adopt conscription as the only solution of the problem." This statement is not accurate, and was taken from my Annual Address to the Board of Governors of the King Edward VII Welsh National Memorial Association. What I did say was:—

"The shortage of nurses was still causing concern and beds were kept vacant owing to that difficulty. Improvement in salaries and conditions, and even the appeal made by Mr. Walter Elliot as Minister of Health in North Wales last year, had elicited no response.

For these reasons the North Wales Sanatorium House Committee felt compelled to advocate a drastic policy. Believing that our position as regards staff might well become acute, and bearing in mind our responsibility to provide adequate and efficient nursing for our patients, whether wounded or tuberculous, the House Committee adopted a resolution strongly expressing the view that Conscription affords the only solution to the 'nursing shortage,' and I was asked by the Finance and General Purposes Committees to make representations to the Minister of Health."

You will observe from this statement that I expressed no personal opinion upon the merits of Conscription; in fact, I only alluded to the minute of the House Committee in order to emphasise the difficult position in which the Association found itself owing to the shortage of nursing staff.

So far as my own views are concerned, I do not believe that conscripting nurses is either desirable or practicable, and as far as I am aware the proposal has not been seriously contemplated by the Association nor has any decision been arrived at by the Council.

I trust that you will be good enough to publish this letter in your next issue so as to remove any misapprehension which may have arisen in the minds of your readers.

Believe me to be,

Yours faithfully,

DAVIES.

The Editor,

THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING,

19, Queen's Gate, London, S.W.7.

[We expressed the opinion in our last issue that no minister would venture to conscript nurses for Civil Service.—Ed.]

## FOOD EDUCATION SOCIETY.

## GREEN VEGETABLES.

The Editor,

BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING,

19, Queen's Gate S.W.7.

DEAR MADAM,—The article in the current issue has been read with equal interest and profit. It was good to note the emphasis laid on freshness and on scientific cookery. I was also delighted to find that your contributor is evidently in agreement with our dictum that raw salads are not, as far too many assume, a summer luxury, but an all-the-year-round necessity. We should be happy to be of service to your readers and to send any a list which includes publications on both subjects referred to.

Yours, etc.,

CHAS. E. HECHT, Hon. Secretary,

Food Education Society.

Gordon House,  
29, Gordon Square,  
London, W.C.1.

## THE EFFICIENT TRAINING OF MIDWIVES.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

Simpson Memorial Maternity Pavilion,  
The Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh.  
Edinburgh, 3.

DEAR EDITOR,—My Part II Nurses have asked me to send to your Journal the following letter, which they have written. I have much pleasure in doing so.

"Although we do not share the view of Miss May A. Ritchie, whose letter appeared in your Journal of August, we Part II nurses of the Simpson Memorial Maternity Pavilion feel that our opinion may be of some interest to others.

"Nurses unwilling to spend one year in midwifery training may take Part I Certificate in six months. Part I Certificate is complete. It is, we understand, the intention of the Central Midwives Board that this certificate will meet the needs of the great proportion of nurses, who, in the past, have qualified as midwives without intending to practise. The waste of clinical material in such a system is obvious.

"In all spheres of education the specialist must spend additional time and study on her subject. The Part II midwife is a specialist who will actually practise midwifery.

"Miss Ritchie says there is a growing feeling, especially when war work is essential, that six months' midwifery training is adequate. Is not midwifery war work? Has not the Minister of Health appealed to midwives to stay at their posts and for married midwives to offer their services? We now understand the importance of a good midwifery service to the country. Moreover, the loss of mothers or babies is serious to a nation at war.

"Many doctors have gone into the Services. Those left behind will have excessive demands on their time. The need for competent, well trained midwives was therefore never greater than now. Just think of the comfort it must be to the men who are fighting for us, to know that their wives will be well cared for during childbirth.

"We do not agree that the cleaning in Maternity Hospitals is excessive. The very nature of the work demands that there is much, "cleaning up" to do. The immaculate

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)