

issued they have been seen in the hands of factory workers and among the harvesters during the dinner hour, and people who have never before had the opportunity of good literature, are now able to "read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest" the philosophy and the teaching of the great masters.

The "penny dreadful" and the newspaper devoted only to police news has been too long the chief mental pabulum of our working classes. It has recently transpired that there are regular "factories" where "penny shockers" are turned out wholesale at the rate of 3s. 6d. to 4s. a thousand words. One of the men who makes his living at this sort of thing recently explained how the factories are carried on.

"We divide the work. I myself do all the plots, such as they are; another does the school stories; a third, the Wild West and Indian yarns; and the fourth, those dealing with naval or military life. It is quantity, not quality, which is required. The publishers do not want high-class literature, they must have a thrilling blood-and-thunder story for boys, and they care not how badly it is written. Plenty of strong incident, startling situations, hair-breadth escapes, following quickly one after the other, put into language full of strong adjectives."

WHAT TO READ.

"The Chitral Campaign: A Narrative of Events in Chitral, Swat, and Bajour," by H. C. Thomson. With 59 illustrations, plans, and map. (Heinemann.)

"Essays about Men, Women, and Books," by Augustine Birrell. Pp. 233, cheap edition. (Stock.)

"Memories and Studies of War and Peace," by Archibald Forbes. Pp. 368, with portrait of author. (Cassell.)

Dramatic Note.

"ROMEO AND JULIET" AT "THE LYCEUM."

WE have a detailed review in hand, from the pen of our critical correspondent, E. G. H., of the current production of "Romeo and Juliet," under the new management at "The Lyceum," but as we have heavy demands upon our space to-day, and as the said review is of considerable length, and we are anxious to give it *in extenso*, on account of the great number of our readers who are interested in dramatic work, we shall reserve it for our Double Number next week.

Coming Events.

October 3rd.—Executive Committee Meeting of the Matron's Council, at the Matron's House, St. Bartholomew's Hospital, at 5 p.m.

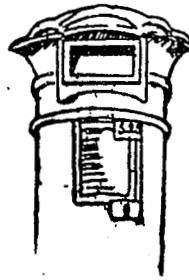
October 4th.—Executive Committee Meeting of the Royal British Nurses' Association, at the offices, 17, Old Cavendish Street, 5 p.m.

October 8th.—Executive Committee Meeting of the Registered Nurses' Society, at 20, Upper Wimpole Street, at 5 p.m. Election of members. Selection of candidates on probation.

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Letters to the Editor.

(Notes, Queries, &c.)

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.

"OUR PIONEERS."

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

MADAM, — In your last issue "A. D." (I think I can guess her identity) alludes to my letter of August 24th, re the "old style Nurse" and gives us a "living picture" of Nurse Mackin, who worked at Scutari in 1854. "A. D." is right in suggesting that the strong individuality of this remarkable woman is still green in my memory, and I learnt a great lesson in her ward which strongly influenced my future work when I in turn was entrusted with the power of superintendence. I was a junior paying Probationer, working as a subordinate and superfluous quantity, quite happy, picking up crumbs of knowledge from doctors, sisters, ward Nurses and scrubbers, when one morning I was drafted on to the women's surgical floor to take charge, as Head Nurse Mackin was ill and ordered to Cheadle for change of air. This important division contained forty beds, in four wards, and the care of the theatre for all female operations.

I tapped at the door of Nurse Mackin's little room and walked in. Nurse Mackin was dressed for departure and seated in her arm chair. I remember the mink palerine she wore round her throat; somehow my eyes rested there and were too abashed to meet hers, which were full of tears.

"I have been sent"—I began and stopped short.

"Come and sit here," she said, pointing to the couch, and she took my hand. "I'm a proud old woman and I'm cut to the quick. I should not mind your coming if it was not for my daughter's sake. Poor S., she has always taken charge for many years in my absence—but there, we must all obey, only a mother's love is stronger than her sense of duty or I should not say a word; and mark my words, if you ladies are going to succeed in Nursing, you must do as they have done in the Queen's army—you must abolish promotion by purchase."

"Now S., help me down stairs, and don't you two girls forget that you have got the responsibility of human life in your hands, patients first, remember, patients first, in spite of feelings." And away she sailed down the lobby, a soldierly, majestic figure, leaning on the arm of her daughter, nodding and smiling good-bye to me as she turned the corner. I took out my note book and dotted down Nurse Mackin's words, and added "Nothing can be right that is not just; promotion must depend on merit, not money." I may add that this custom of note taking was in accordance with a determination upon the part of myself and the colleague who shared my room, that "we would learn one definite thing every day," and sometimes the lesson was practical, sometimes moral; any way we exchanged experiences at night, and by this means digested much useful knowledge.

This lesson that every Probationer who enters a Nursing School, should do so on an equal footing—and the most capable women receive recognition and promotion—is one on which I still feel very strongly, and the old system of "promotion by purchase" which still prevails in some of our Hospitals, where after a year as Paying Pupil, young and ignorant women are given charge of wards over the heads of thoroughly experienced and meritorious "regular Probationers," is a system which I hope the Uniform Cur-

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