

"She drew a long breath and looked at the room. The floor was bare, not even a rug by the bedside. There was hardly any furniture, except the great square, four-poster mahogany bedstead, its hangings of blue and silver damask riddled by time and moths. The curtains by the open window showed as fine lace work. There was a blackened, gilt-framed glass over the mantelshelf. A basin-stand of common grained deal held a chipped basin and jug of the cheapest kind. A plain deal table served as a dressing-table, but the toilet-glass was Sheraton, and had brass candle-sconces either side of it."

It is in these surroundings that Anne is most charming. We do not wonder that the widower thought so. G. M. R.

The Tides.

Be careful what rubbish you toss in the tide,
On outgoing billows it drifts from your sight;
But back on the incoming waves it may ride,
And land at your threshold again before night.
Be careful what rubbish you toss in the tide.
Be careful what follies you toss in life's sea,
On bright dancing billows they toss far away;
But back on the Nemesis tides they may be,
Thrown down at your threshold an unwelcome day.
Be careful what follies you toss in youth's sea.

ELLA WHEELER WILCOX, in *Poems of Power*.

What to Read.

"A Mother of Czars." A sketch of the life of Marie Feodorowna, wife of Paul I. and mother of Alexander I. and Nicholas I. By Mrs. Colquhoun Grant.
"Seth of the Cross." By Alphonse Courlander.
"The Confessions of An Ambitious Mother."
"Sandy." By the author of "Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch."
"Fond Adventures." Tales of the Youth of the World. By Maurice Hewlett.
"The Bell in the Fog," and other stories. By Gertrude Atherton.
"The Red Cravat." By A. T. Sheppard.
"The Marble City." By G. B. Burgin.
"Reminiscences of a Radical Parson." By Rev. W. Tuckwell, M.A.
"The Middle Wall." By Edward Marshall.

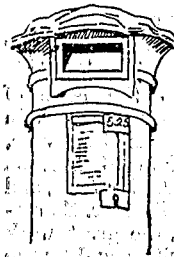
Coming Events.

May 3rd.—Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Society for the State Registration of Trained Nurses, 431, Oxford Street, London, W., 4.30 p.m.

April 26th.—Princess Christian lays the foundation-stone of the West Wales Sanatorium at Alltymynda, near Llanbyther, Carmarthenshire.

May 5th.—The Board of Trade will hear objections to the granting of a Licence to the Incorporated Society for Promoting the Higher Education and Training of Nurses to incorporate without the word "Limited" after its name, in the Deputation Room of the Board, at 7, Whitehall Gardens, S.W., 11.30.

May 11th.—Select Committee on Nursing. Chairman, H. J. Tennant, Esq., M.P., House of Commons, Committee Room 17, 11.30 a.m.



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.

IS IT FAIR?

To the Editor of the "British Journal of Nursing."

DEAR MADAM,—I am glad to see that you call attention in your valuable paper to the injustice done to private nurses by using their earnings to support charitable schemes for nursing the sick poor. The wealthy should regard the support of such societies as an obligation of wealth, and one would have supposed, had one not ample proof to the contrary, that the "leisured classes" would have scorned to allow the expenses of such nursing to be defrayed "to a considerable extent" by the unacknowledged gifts of nurses who are working women.

How often one sees that the expenses of charitable work are defrayed out of the "profits" of private nursing institutions. What does this mean? Simply, in plain language, that the nurses are not paid the whole of their earnings, and that the balance between what they earn and what they receive is annexed and utilised—of course, after expenses are defrayed—by the Committees who employ them. Why nurses submit to such a system is more than I can understand.

Why do they not all, as some do, join together and form co-operations, take their own fees, and defray their own office expenses, instead of being farmed out for the benefit of the middleman, whether philanthropic or commercial? It has been proved that this can be done on a 7½ per cent. basis, to cover the expense of offices and the necessary secretarial work. Of course, if a Residential Home is maintained, which some nurses prefer, for living about in boarding-houses between cases is costly and comfortless, the expense will be proportionately increased. The point is that the whole of the profits belong to the nurses, whose earnings they are, and should not be manipulated by Committees.

Take a case in point. I know a nurse who for more than a year has been earning £2 2s. a week at one case. These fees are paid to the institution, and the nurse receives a quarterly cheque for £8 15s., her earnings for that period being, of course, £27 6s. True, the Home which sends her out must be maintained, and she may return to it at any time, but her contribution to its support—viz., £18 11s. out of £27 6s., she costing it absolutely nothing except a trifle for uniform—seems excessive to the lay mind.

Why nurses consent to such arrangements is a point which always puzzles me. Are they too inert, too incapable to place their affairs on a business basis? Judging from their capacity in other directions, one would not have supposed so, but what other reason is worthy of consideration when the obvious advantages of such a system are weighed? Perhaps some of your private nursing readers will be good enough to explain the inexplicable to

LAYWOMAN.

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