

indicated. Love—real love—purifies him. We do actually feel that Nanine had a chance of happiness with him, as we lay down an engrossing story.

G. M. R.

### It Might Have Been.

We will be what we could be. Do not say,  
"It might have been, had not or that or this"  
No fate can keep us from the chosen way;  
He only might who *is*.

We will do what we could do. Do not dream,  
Chance leaves a hero all uncrowned to grieve.  
I hold, all men are greatly what they seem;  
He does who could achieve.

We will climb where we could climb. Tell me not  
Of adverse storms that kept thee from the height,  
What eagle eye missed the peak he sought?  
He always climbs who might.

I do not like the phrase, "It might have been!"  
It lacks all force, and life's best truths perverts.  
For I believe we have, and reach, and win,  
Whatever our deserts.

ELLA WHEELER WILCOX,  
*In Poems of Life.*

### What to Read.

"The Book of the V.C.: a Record of the Deeds of Heroism for which the Victoria Cross has been bestowed from its institution in 1857 to the present time. Compiled from Official papers and other authentic sources." By A. L. Haydon.

"The Call of the Blood." By Robert S. Hichens, (author of the "Garden of Allah").

"The Dream and the Business." By John Oliver Hobbes.

"Beyond the Wall." By J. H. Yoxall, M.P.

"The Youngest Miss Mowbray." By B. M. Croker.

"The Eight Guests." By Percy White.

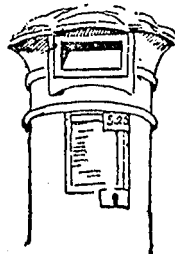
"Simla Village Tales." By Alice Elizabeth Dracott.

### A Word for the Wreck.

How easily is one inspired with momentary enthusiasm by some noble thought, or the idea of performing some magnanimous deed! But this excitement is followed by a state of nervous exhaustion, or, to state the case more simply and honestly by *laziness*. There wake up all sorts of little likes and dislikes which were hushed at first, and at last, although the work may, as we had pictured it to ourselves, be indeed a noble one, yet, all the same we find that we can get on without it; and besides, who would thank us for our pains if we were to trouble about it? Here we see that moral weakness which so lightly dons the cloak of heroism, but has not the enduring strength necessary for holding fast the ideals of youth, and then coolly, as though it had not long ago weighed the whole matter, rejects as an idle dream that which it was too lazy to convert from dream to reality.—*Lotze*.

### 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.*

### CHRONIC AND INCURABLE CASES.

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

DEAR MADAM,—I am glad to see in last week's edition of the BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING, a letter from an "Old-fashioned Woman," on the above subject. She does not say whether she is a nurse, I presume not, or she would know that there are two sides to the question—viz., the nurses' as well as the patients'. Being a nurse of some experience with chronic patients as well as those suffering from acute illnesses, I should like to write a few words in reply, and I hope other private nurses will do the same. Knowing you always to be the champion of fair play, I feel sure you will find space in your valuable journal for my letter.

In the association to which I belong, we have a rule that nurses do not remain longer than two months at a case. Of course it is an elastic one, as a nurse always prefers to finish a case, but in chronic cases this rule should be adhered to, the nurse can always return later if she and the patient desire it, and she would be refreshed with change of work and society, and be better able to take up the work again, therefore, a better nurse than if she remained indefinitely.

Some nurses remain with a chronic case till they imagine no one else can manage but themselves. This is quite a delusion. Do we not all know in this life our places are easily filled by others *quite as capable*, and nursing is no exception. I have relieved other nurses, and they me, and the result has been in favour of the patient. When a nurse feels worn out and irritable, common sense, and justice to her employer, demand a change, and the nurse is wrong who does not recognise that fact. And she must act for herself in the matter, for how can an association, however well managed, form an opinion for her? It can know but little of the case or the nurse's powers of endurance.

Chronic illnesses differ quite as much as acute ones, except that nearly always the patient's nerves are in a weaker state owing to the length of the illness. Some cases a nurse may never wish to leave, while others try her patience to the last degree. I am thinking of two in my own experience, the one a gentleman suffering from an incurable disease, but gifted with a clever brain. I was his secretary as well as nurse, so got keenly interested in his professional work. It was an education to be with that man, and although he never allowed me to be "out of call," had he lived ten years I should not have wished to leave

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)