

up an intangible barrier between him and his former circle. His father-in-law's munificence enables him to live luxuriously and to drive in an expensive car. Edith cannot comprehend the exigencies of military etiquette, especially German military etiquette, and though she loves him sincerely, and tries to adapt herself, she rebels against a mode of life which is altogether antagonistic to her experience.

On the first night in their new home Helmut has to rise at dawn for drill.

"Hellie . . . don't leave me all alone. It's such an ungodly hour, or at least follow on with your friends in the car. You'll catch the soldiers up easily." "The marching and singing died away in the distance. She instinctively felt, There is something all round about you, and above you, which you know nothing of. He is not independent like an English gentleman. He has strange men over him—no, not exactly men, rather a law . . . a willing subordination." On the occasion of her parents' visit to her, Helmut is ordered confinement to his room for some breach of discipline, which order prohibited visitors also. It is after this indignity that he obtains long leave from his Colonel, in order to consider whether or not he would resign his commission. He and Edith then live for a long time in England on the bounty of old Mr. Wilding. The old man offers to give them his beautiful place Rosemary Hills as a permanent home. But Lieutenant Merker has to decide once and for all between becoming a man of leisure in England and a German officer. After a stormy scene with Edith, he formally sends the wire: "I beg respectfully to give notice that I wish to return to active service—Lieutenant Merker." Comment on this absorbing novel would be difficult at the present time, but all should read it for themselves and judge if it is a fair picture of the English as a class, or whether the author has been wilfully prejudiced in representing a class that undoubtedly exists, as a type of the nation as a whole.

H. H.

COMING EVENTS.

February 16th.—Irish Nurses' Association, 34, St. Stephen's Green, Dublin. Lecture on "Anaesthetics." Dr. Meldon. 7.30 p.m.

February 27th.—National Council of Trained Nurses' Meeting. 431, Oxford Street, London, W. 4 p.m.

WORD FOR THE WEEK.

The road before thee may seem dark and strange.
But God is still the same, He cannot change.

Dost thou remember, when thy strength was spent,

And thou hadst fallen weary by the way,
How comfort came, and how of rest was sent,

And the fresh strength for yet another day?

So shall it be—whate'er the journey's length,

To its last footstep—"As thy day thy strength."

M. GORGES.

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.

A QUESTION FOR THE PUBLIC.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

MADAM,—A copy of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING has been sent to me with the passage marked relating to the "dangerous interference by the unskilled" in matters relating to nursing the sick and wounded. As I am entirely unskilled except in so far as experience, observation, and I hope a certain amount of common sense have made me otherwise, I presume the marked passages are intended to show me the error of my ways.

I plead guilty to designing two hospitals; one which has been running for eleven years; the other I converted with the aid of the estate builder from a riding-school and tennis-court into a Hospital for sick and wounded three months ago, and the War Office now wishes me to add more wards both to this and the Cottage Hospital.

I shall be very happy to subject both Hospitals to your criticism if you like to send down your representative any day but Wednesday, February 3rd.

I am solely responsible for the management, though of course I employ trained nurses. I may mention that this is a Base Hospital, and that I receive the wounded direct from France.

In justice to one of the "Unskilled" I hope you will inspect the Hospital, and I am not in the least above accepting or acting upon any unprejudiced criticism.

Yours faithfully,

M. BEDFORD (*Duchess of Bedford*).

Woburn Abbey, Woburn.

[Copies of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING containing the Statement criticising the constitution and resulting system of nursing adopted by the British Red Cross Society, and presented to the Acting Director General of the Army Medical Service, as printed in our last issue have been distributed amongst influential women known to be interested in the nursing of the sick, the Duchess of Bedford amongst others. We claim that the standard of nursing for our sick and wounded soldiers is a National question, and the trained nurses' point of view, which has been ignored by the B.R.C.S., should be brought prominently forward. We thank the Duchess of Bedford for her liberal-minded letter, and hasten to assure her that no personal reflection was intended. As far as we know she is not amongst the Duchesses who have without training and the necessary skill adopted the title and duties of the Matron of a hospital, and assumed her professional dress.

We have long claimed that women should be included on the Boards of Management of all

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