

Professional Reviews.

A MONSTROUS LIBEL.

IN the December number of the *Windsor Magazine* a new story by Mr. Hall Caine called "The Christian" was begun, in the opening chapters of which we are introduced to a young woman, the grand-daughter of a clergyman in the Isle of Man, who is described as "unconventional" and "high-spirited" by the author, but whom we have no hesitation in describing here as "gloriously" vulgar. Of course this siren—Glory by name—instead of at once gravitating to her proper place behind the Gaiety or Empire bar is selected, we presume without a personal interview, to be a probationer in a London Hospital termed "Martha's Vineyard," Hyde Park, London, the location of which institution is so described as to leave no doubt as to its identity. But the glorious one shall describe her environment in her own graphic style, which description she forwards by letter to "Dear Auntie Rachel."

"The *personnelle* of our Vineyard is abundant, but there are various sour grapes growing about. We have a medical school (containing lots of nice boys—only a girl may not speak to them even in the corridors), and a full staff of honorary and visiting physicians and surgeons. But the only doctor we really have much to do with is the house doctor, a young fellow who has just finished his student's course. His name is Abery, and since Saturday he has so much respect for Glory that she might even swear in his presence (in Manx); but Sister Allworthy (previously described "as an example of 'delicate femalism' just verging on old maidenism") takes care that she doesn't, having designs on his celibacy herself. He must have sung his *Te Deum* after the operation, for he got gloriously drunk and wanted to inject morphia in a patient recovering from trouble of the kidney. It was an old hippopotamus of a German musician named Koenig, and he was in frantic terror. So I whispered to him to pretend to go to sleep, and then I told the doctor I had lost my syringe. But—'Gough bless me sowl!'—what a dressing the Sister gave me!"

Imagine a new probationer in possession of a morphia syringe, and drunken house physicians saved from murder by its opportune loss!

The letter continues:—

"All Hospital Nurses are just now basking in the sunshine of a forthcoming ball. It is to be held at Bartimæus's Hospital, where they have a large theatre, and the dancing there is for once to be to a happier tune. All the earth is to be there—all the Hospital earth—and if I could afford to array myself in the necessary splendour I would show this benighted London what an absolute angel Glory is! But then my first full holiday is to be on the 24th, when I expect to be out from 10 a.m. until 10 p.m. I am nearly crazy whenever I think of it, and when the time comes to make my first plunge into London

I know I shall hold my breath exactly as if I were taking a header off Creg Malin rocks. . . ."

The "header" begins thus:—

"On the morning of the 24th Glory rose at five that she might get through her work and have the entire day for her holiday. At that hour she came upon a rough-haired nurse wearing her cap a little on one side and washing a floor with disinfectants. Being in great spirits Glory addressed her cheerfully.

'Are you off to-day too?' she said.

The nurse gave her a contemptuous glance and answered, 'I'm not one of your paying probationers, Miss—playing probationers I call them. We nurses are hard-working women whose life spells duty, and we've got no time for sight-seeing and holiday-making.'

'No, but you are one of those who ruin the profession altogether,' said a younger woman who had just come up. 'They will expect everybody to do the same. This is my day off, but I have to do the grate and sweep the ward, and wash the patients, and make my own bed, and tidy the nurse's room—and it's all through people like you. Small thanks you get for it either, for a girl may not even wear her hair in a fringe, and she is always expecting to hear the Matron's 'You're not fit for nursing, Miss.'"

So in the nursing world, according to the vivid imagination of Mr. Hall Caine, the Lady Superintendent or Head of a Training School, addresses her subordinates as "Miss."

It would not be profitable to follow these two young women, Glory Quayle and Polly Love, upon their day's holiday, suffice it to say that they meet (very appropriately in Piccadilly) a young man who discloses himself upon introduction to Glory by saying "something about a glorious name and a glorious pleasure to be nursed by such a nurse, and then both girls laughed. He was sorry he could not see them back to the hospital, being dragged away to the Treasury reception in the honour of the old lady's birthday." We have heard before of that young man, but were under the impression his haunts were in 'appy 'ampstead and not in Mayfair.

In the January issue of the magazine we find the following glowing account of the Nurses' Ball held at Bartimæus Hospital, to which of course "Glory" and "Polly" go.

"It was a grief to both of them that a nurse's costume concealed a girl's neck, and also that dearest of a girl's charms—the sweet roundness of her dimpled arm. But it was some satisfaction that a nurse's sleeve concealed also the marks of the vaccination which hospital regulations had imposed upon probationers. . . ."

"The ball is held in the operating theatre of the hospital, a great circular hall with a gallery running round its walls, which were now festooned with flags, and roofed with a glass dome from which coloured lamps were hanging. Some four hundred girls and as many men were gathered there; the pit was their dancing-ring and the gallery was their withdrawing-room. The men were nearly all students of the medical schools, the girls were nearly all nurses, and

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