

another. And you say, "Absurd" . . . The wilderness had patted him on the head, and behold it was like a ball, an ivory ball; it had caressed him, and, lo! he had withered; it had taken him, loved him, embraced him, got into his veins, consumed his flesh, and sealed his soul to its own by the inconceivable rites of some devilish initiation. He was its spoiled and pampered favourite. . . . He had taken a high seat among the devils of the land—I mean literally. You can't understand—how could you?—with solid pavement under your feet, surrounded by kind neighbours ready to cheer you or fall upon you, stepping delicately between the butcher and the policeman, in the holy terror of scandal and gallows and lunatic asylums—how can you imagine what particular region of the first ages a man's untrammelled feet may take him into by the way of solitude—utter solitude without a policeman—by the way of silence—utter silence, where no warning voice of a kind neighbour can be heard whispering of public opinion? These little things make all the great difference. When they are gone you must fall back upon your own innate strength, upon your own capacity for faithfulness."

There is a taste of the author's quality. Those who like the sample may be warmly encouraged to try more. It is going down into the deeps of life to voyage with Mr. Conrad. G. M. R.

Bookland.

The first copy of *Men and Women*, a new weekly paper, edited by George R. Sims, contains an article on "Nurses in London." To the probationer the editor extends his sympathy. "Sweeping, cleaning, polishing, backaches, scoldings from impatient staff nurses, orders here, orders there—and often such tired feet"—all are her portion. Poor staff nurse! She is not so picturesque a figure as the pro, but she is often just as tired.

The Light of Other Days.

New shadows round the hayricks creep,
New lambs are in the fold,
Old shadows rise, a tryst to keep,
Forget that they are old!

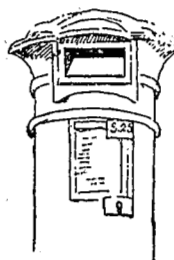
The dear dead years seem all aglow,
Limelight on every scene!
On all that golden long ago
No mist, no might have been.

The light that never was shines there;
Love-light by memory trimmed;
'Tis only what we lose keeps fair,
For ever young, undimmed.

K. M., in *Westminster Gazette*.

What to Read.

- "Mazzini." By Bolton King, M.A.
"The Life of Robert Buchanan." By Harriett Jay.
"Letters of E. R. Gurney (Mrs. Russell Gurney)." Edited by her Niece.
"Poor Sons of a Day." By Allan McAulay.
"The Man who Lost His Past." By Frank Richardson.



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.

A WANT MET.

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

DEAR MADAM,—The interesting letter you published in your last issue from the officers of the British Gynaecological Society draws attention to a need which has for long existed as to some means whereby nurses who intend to take up maternity or gynaecological nursing can afford proof of their efficiency in these branches of work.

It is a matter of common knowledge in the nursing world that, as the British Gynaecological Society points out, a probationer may pass through the whole of her training and receive no instruction in gynaecological or obstetric nursing, and indeed, as a rule, she does so. If, however, she does spend any time in wards devoted to these branches of work she is subjected to no test in order to ascertain whether she has profited by the instruction received. In the first place, no lectures are given on these subjects, and the examinations of nurses in our training-schools are conducted by examiners with whom an obstetric physician is rarely if ever associated; and, in the second place, it would be manifestly unfair to examine candidates in subjects in which a large proportion have received no instruction either theoretically or practically.

But what happens after a nurse is certificated as competent by a leading training-school is that she is considered qualified to nurse gynaecological cases. Is this fair, either on her or on the patients who employ her? I think not; therefore, I welcome the action of the Gynaecological Society in offering to nurses a test which, so far, the training-schools have not afforded. The field of work which it proposes to cover is fallow ground; the nearest approach to it is the examination of the London Obstetrical Society, but the essential difference is that the latter Society certifies to the knowledge of midwifery, not of nursing, of those who satisfy its requirements; nursing is left out of the question, as indeed it must be at the end of three months' special training in midwifery.

Pending further information, I venture to express my pleasure at the action of the Gynaecological Society. I hope it foreshadows the day when, as has been done in Victoria while we are thinking about it, public examinations of nurses will be conducted by a conjoint board of examiners independent of the private examinations of the hospitals, not only in special subjects, as in the present instance, but on all points covered by a nurse's training.

I am,
Dear Madam,
Yours faithfully,
MATERNITY NURSE.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)