

in society nowadays; you cannot make a silken purse out of a sow's ear. The second is, that the woman without principle may fall to any depth, till, by degrees, all delicacy, all fine feeling, all good impulse, cease in her.

There are some to whom such a lesson may be salutary. If ever the ugliness of selfishness, fraud, and greed were clearly shown, it is here in these pages. One winces from their relentless cruelty, their ghastly picture of a world whose god is Mammon.

G. M. R.

### El Madonna of To-day.

(For a picture.)

Above her head a People's Dwelling towered,  
Flat upon flat, cramped, iron-balconied,  
Dreary, symmetrical, monotonous.  
The mid-day air was foul with putrid smells,  
And on the scorching pavement at her feet  
Groups of slum children shouted, playing games  
With broken buttons, bits of wood and straw,  
Or mimic cricket—half a lath for bat.  
A hurdy-gurdy jangled out-worn tunes,  
And shrill-voiced women gossiped on the kerb;  
While from the Public-houses down the street  
Surged noisy waves of drunken argument.

Deaf to the noise, unconscious, all absorbed,  
An undergrown and half-developed thing—  
Mere child in years, yet with a woman's face,  
Deep scarred with marks of care and pain and fear—  
Huddled she sat upon the steep stone stair,  
Her weakness, strength, to guard a weaker still.  
Close to her breast a puny child she held,  
White-faced and pitiful, with sad, wide eyes;  
His head lay on her shoulder 'gainst her face,  
One little outstretched hand caressed her neck;  
He nestled close, and she bent over him,  
They seemed alone, those two, in all the world.

Thus crouched she humbly on the lowest step,  
In love and awe, oblivious of the world,  
Nor ever dreamt that she and her pale babe  
Held claims divine, as the old Painters saw.  
What tho' no halo orbed a perfect face  
'Gainst lovely glimpse of cypress-crowned hills—  
Her only background a dark common stair—  
Love's tenderness divine was in her eyes,  
Love's strength divine in her protecting arms.  
Unconscious, meek, unreverenced she sat,  
All her dear world held safe against her heart,  
The type eternal of all Motherhood.

—EVA ANSTRUTHER,  
In the *Westminster Gazette*.

### What to Read.

"Studies in Saintship." Translated from the French of E. Hello.

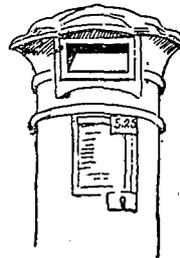
"Idylls of the North." By R. H. Forster.

"Barlach of the Guard." By Henry Seton Merriman.

"The Mettle of the Pasture." By James Lane Allen.

"A Matter of Morals." By Hugh Cayley.

"A Metamorphosis." By Richard Marsh.



### 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.*

#### THE EDUCATION OF NURSES.

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

DEAR MADAM,—I was much interested in the able paper published by you in the *BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING* on the need of an institution for the education of nurses independent of the hospitals. Nursing has now become such a highly skilled occupation that it is time some body was charged with the care of our educational interests. I suppose nobody will assert that in the first instance hospitals undertook the training of nurses in any interests except their own. A training-school was a convenient and cheap method of providing for the care of the sick. True, as the system grew, hospital committees became to a certain extent educational authorities. In proportion to the reputation of their schools, such schools attracted the most desirable young women to apply for positions as probationers, and so, again in the interests of the institution concerned, it was desirable that the training given should be efficient. But who looks primarily after the interests of the nurse? Who, for instance, sees that the probationer who on the completion of her training intends to take up private nursing has any education fitting her for this work? Is not her standard of success estimated by her ability to manage a ward? Yet an excellent ward manager may be a hopeless failure as a private nurse. I do not think we can blame the hospitals overmuch for not considering the needs of the sick outside their walls. Their primary duty is to provide efficiently for the sick poor under their care; but none the less should nurses be able to obtain an education which will best fit them for the care of the sick public, and this end, it appears to me, would be best attained through a body charged primarily with looking after the educational interests of nurses from an impartial standpoint.

Is the system of training which obtains at present the best which can be devised, or, in the light of experience, might it not be re-arranged with advantage to all concerned? That, I take it, is the point at issue. Few of us, I think, would be prepared to say that the present methods could not be improved upon.

Faithfully yours,  
IMPARTIAL.

#### NURSES AND THRIFT.

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

DEAR MADAM,—I do not want to draw the correspondent who signs herself "Independence." But the charge which she brings against a well-known investment is so serious, and so publicly made, that she ought to be willing to have it either admitted or cleared up.

Either she is, or the Pension Fund has been, very wrong indeed.

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