

gence, who from some height immeasurably above them sat in judgment on them all. . . . And underneath these Mr. Rickmans, though inextricably, damnably one with them, was a certain apparently common-place, but amiable young man, who lived in a Bloomsbury boarding-house and dropped his aitches. This young man was tender and chivalrous, full of little innocent civilities to the ladies of his boarding-house; he admired, above all things, modesty in a woman, and somewhere in the dark and unexplored corners of his nature, he concealed a prejudice in favour of marriage and the sanctities of home. That made six, and no doubt they would have pulled well enough together; but the bother was that any one of them was liable at any moment to the visitation of the seventh, Mr. Rickman the genius. There was no knowing whether he would come in the form of a high god or a demon, a consolation or a torment. . . . Seven Rickmans! Only think of it! And some reckon on eight—Mr. Rickman drunk!"

This is the youth whose vicissitudes and phases and amours and love and life and failure and success, Miss Sinclair sets herself to show.

She does it, to my thinking, so marvellously well, that it is a pity she has not done it even better. If she were a greater writer, she could have given us the same picture in half the words, and the effect would then stand out clear, not marred by detail, which, however accurate, and even brilliant, must be described as excessive.

But the ability is astonishing. It will not be surprising if Miss Sinclair achieves something that will live. Which, after all, will be more than to be the most successful of the idle novelists of a day that has no time for details and no taste for reflection.

G. M. R.

Outside the Hospital.

The tall grey building rears its massive crown,
Silent and splendid; all the lights are low,
And passing underneath I seem to know
That through the long, white ward moves up and
down

With soft, firm foot and scarcely whispering gown,
Some nurse, as silent as the winds that blow—
The hushed night winds that wander to and fro—
With words of comfort for the weary town.

Outside the lighted windows of the ward,
Beyond the peaceful silence and God's sleep,
Torn by a bitter conscience, keen-set sword,
Stabbed by an age-old sorrow driven deep,
How many wounded through the darkness steal—
Hearts that no herb nor any hand can heal!

WILL H. OGILVIE in the *Outlook*.

What to Read.

"The Downfall of Russia: Behind the Scenes in the Realm of the Czar." By Hugo Ganz.

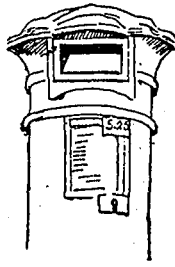
"The Private Lives of William II. and his Consort." By Henry W. Fischer.

"Sun-Babies: Studies in the Child Life of India." By Cornelia Sorabji.

"Wings of the Morning." Poems by Cicely Fox-Smith.

"The Pilgrims." By E. Belaysse.

"Wasted Fires." By Hume Nisbet.



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.

OUR GUINEA PRIZE.

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

Miss Tunnard acknowledges with thanks your cheque for one guinea for the puzzle prize, and wishes for the BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING the great success it deserves.

Convalescent Home, Withernsea, near Hull.

DISTRICT NURSES' HOLIDAYS.

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

DEAR MADAM,—The provision of suitable holidays for the staff of the Leeds District Nursing Association offers considerable difficulties.

The nurses are already so full-handed that no one nurse can take on the work of another during her absence, and it is therefore necessary to employ special holiday nurses, who undertake the work of each of the regular staff in succession. But this plan is not altogether satisfactory for two reasons.

In the first place, a nurse coming temporarily into a new district is not so efficient as one thoroughly conversant with the district and with the patients, so that with the best intentions the latter suffer to some extent.

And, secondly, the cost of providing holiday nurses, three of whom are required during the whole summer season from April to November, by the Leeds Association, is a heavy drain on funds already inadequate for the quantity of work which is to be done.

It has therefore been suggested by a subscriber that in lieu of these holiday nurses, the homes should be entirely closed for four weeks in the summer. At this season the work is the lightest, and, therefore, the nurses would be the least missed. The staff would all have their holidays at the pleasantest time in the year, and would, therefore, obtain the maximum of refreshment and strength for the next year's work; while a minor, but still important practical advantage would be that the absence from the home would enable the superintendents to get the home cleaned, whitewashed, &c., more effectually than can be done when the home is fully occupied.

On the other hand, there is, of course, the great difficulty that patients, some of them serious cases, would necessarily be neglected during the absence of the staff.

The object of this letter is to elicit from any of your readers who may be interested in the subject, or possessed of experience in district nursing, their opinion on the question; more particularly as those responsible for the Leeds District Nursing Association wish to learn whether this plan of entirely closing the home has been tried in other cases, and with what results.—Yours truly,

K. E. BARLOW, Superintendent,
District Nurses' Home, Leeds.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)