

and go in for the primal passions. This seems to me a grossly unfair parody of the tendency of the book.

Selwyn Harpur is pilloried because he is a prig, not because he is a scholar. The author takes much pains to describe to us how Humphrey Stott, university graduate and journalist turned farmer, is interested in all the current learning and thought of his day. Selwyn seems at first to have no worse defect than a lack of sense of humour. But later on we learn that he was not quite straightforward.

The meeting of the two men, Stott and Harpur, the calculated coldness and reserve of Selwyn towards a type which is new to him, and Humphrey Stott's effort to be just to him, is admirably given.

Vivien too, is quite a creation; in fact, few men so understand a woman as does Charles Marriott.

The book is full of those exquisite little touches of life's simple, unfathomable mysteries, which evoke an instant throb of sympathy in the reader. Take this for a sample:—

"Vivien met with several children moving secretly, and she thought that before breakfast all children wear a look, not exactly of wrongdoing, but of carrying out some private business in the confidence of the morning, itself young, not to be trusted to full day, or the cognizance of grown-up people."

The Newlyn group of painters comes into the story, thinly veiled as the Trevenen painters. The account of the private view is simply delicious. So is the description of the local horse-racing, and Selwyn's condescending attendance thereat.

In describing Selwyn as a person 'without atmosphere,' Mr. Marriott exactly hits the right nail on the head. He is one of those excellent and intelligent people without intuitions. He never perceives when he is striking a wrong note. Also he does not acknowledge his faults and weaknesses to himself. From end to end the book is full of admirable little side-lights on character. We have only one lingering regret—that the author has never the courage to show us Vivien and Humphrey together. Perhaps he thinks it would be lack of reticence; but we feel a little defrauded. We have seen the girl repressed and depressed by the arid excellence of Selwyn. We crave to know her when stimulated by the wideness and sincerity of Humphrey. G. M. R.

### Coming Events.

May 11th.—Meeting of the Executive Committee, Society for State Registration of Trained Nurses, 431, Oxford-street. 3.30 p.m.

May 14th.—King Edward's Coronation Fund for Irish Nurses, Annual Meeting, Dublin.

May 14th.—Sale of genuine old bric-à-brac and Antique Furniture for the benefit of poor gentlewomen, 14, Brook Street, Hanover Square, open to Wednesday, May 23rd. 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.

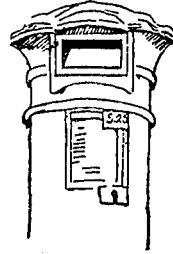
May 17th.—West Ham Hospital. Sale at Grosvenor House. 2 p.m.

May 18th.—Lady Helen Munro-Ferguson on State Registration of Nurses, Midwives' Institute, Buckingham Street, Strand. 7.30 p.m.

May 19th.—Deputation to the Prime Minister on Women's Suffrage, Foreign Office. 12 noon.

### 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.*

#### THOUGHTS ON NOTE-TAKING.

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

DEAR MADAM,—I venture to wonder how often nurses are taught how to take notes.

My experience has been that the nurses rush off to their lectures generally very tired, and feeling that "they haven't a leg left to stand on" and certainly "no brain."

Is an audience who gaze blankly at the lecturer, vainly struggling to take in what he is saying, any more inspiring than the audience with eyes glued to the paper?

The few keen ones will bend over their note-books, taking down every word they can catch, the very mental effort helping them to hear and afterwards call to mind the rest. Other few less keen take an extra forcible remark down here and there at random, afterwards utterly unable to see the sense or meaning of what they have taken down. The majority fix their stony gaze on the lecturer and take in nothing. The keen one scores, but with a supreme effort.

For the tired nurse note-taking is absolutely imperative; but let her be taught to write clearly, first the heading, then each point to be discussed, &c., &c., and she will find her brain trained to tabulate on her memory the gist of what she is noting on the paper in her hand.

I have lectured and been lectured to and am confident that most lecturers would agree with me that if the audience show interest and intelligence, either with their eyes or with their pencils, one needs no further inspiration or encouragement.

One is glad that nowadays more care is taken with the theoretical part of a hospital nurse's training. Perhaps the "theoretical nurse" with no tendency to practicability is more deplorable than the practical nurse with no theory; but, to my mind, both virtues are necessary, especially when in most cases the knowledge has to be passed on to others, either directly or indirectly.

This is a point, too, which should be given grave consideration when appointing those whose duty it is to teach probationers. I can well call to mind a lecturer (?) whose only answer to an eager seeker of knowledge was frequently, "Really, nurse, you shouldn't ask such silly questions." Once, when the question was "Sister, please, what would one do if a typhoid patient had sudden hæmorrhage?" the answer was, "It is so long since I was in a medical ward (about one year). I have forgotten."

This was in a well-known London hospital, and I only hope that now, the promotions are perhaps made

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