

understanding the situation, gives an order which, if carried out, would lead to much bloodshed. Sooner than allow this, Gordon disobeys the order, which another man carries out; the event proves how right Gordon was, but that is no mitigation of his military offence. He is placed under arrest for offences which, if tried, would have cost him his life. He breaks his arrest, has a stormy meeting with the General, which ends in Gordon, in self defence, pushing the old man from him, apparently causing his death. He flies from Cairo and goes to Khartoum. Helena, coming into the room, finds her father dead, and at once concludes he has been murdered by Ishmael Ameer, the Prophet. Eventually she also goes to Khartoum, burning for revenge on the man who she believes has murdered her father and robbed her of her lover. She passes herself off as an Indian Rani, and, in order to get a footing in Ishmael's house, becomes his secretary, finally being betrothed to him. In this way she gains a knowledge of all his secret plans regarding a pilgrimage to Cairo with thousands of followers. She has just betrayed all his secrets to the Consul-General when Gordon arrives.

How he saves the situation, and how he is once more taken into favour, is thrillingly told. For his character and Ishmael's one can feel nothing but admiration and sympathy, but that any decent-minded young Englishwoman could behave in the way Helena did seems incredible. If Lord Nuneham is supposed to be a portrait of Lord Cromer, surely it is a caricature.

E. L. H.

VERSE.

Joy is not of the past, nor from things that were;
Joy is not of our hope, nor of conscious seeing,
The light of joy is white, a glory in being,
That asks no will nor memory, only is there!

GEOFFREY WINTHROP YOUNG.

COMING EVENTS.

September 21st.—Society of Women Journalists entertain ladies of International Press Conference. Waldorf Hotel, 3 to 5 p.m.

September 22nd.—The Lord Mayor lays the foundation-stone of the new Nurses' Home at the City of London Asylum, Stone, near Dartford.

September 25th.—The Lord Mayor lays the foundation-stone of St. Mary's Hospital for Women and Children at Plaistow.

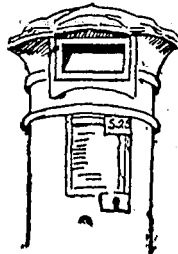
October 2nd.—Nurses' Missionary League. Farewell meeting, University Hall, Gordon Square, W.C.

October 7th.—Territorial Force Nursing Service. Meeting Executive Committee, Mansion House, 3 p.m. Reception by Lady Mayoress of members of the Service, 4 to 6 p.m.; music, tea and coffee.

October 8th.—Society for the State Registration of Trained Nurses. Meeting of the Executive Committee, 431, Oxford Street, London, W., 4 p.m.

October 25th.—Central Midwives' Board Examination.

Letters to the Editor.



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 POOR LAW MATRON'S PROTEST.

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

DEAR MADAM,—The very erroneous statements concerning the treatment (or rather ill-treatment) of patients in Poor-Law Infirmaries, quoted in your issue of September 11th, from the evidence of Mr. Sydney Holland when examined by the Poor-Law Commission, cannot be allowed to pass without a protest.

The statements libel not only a very large section of the nursing profession but also the medical and nursing authorities in charge of a number of well-managed and well-equipped nurse training schools, which schools are responsible for no small proportion of the trained and certificated nurses working in Great Britain, in the Army and Naval Nursing Services, in the Jubilee Nurses' Institute, in fact wherever trained nurses are employed.

One has yet to learn that even 40 years ago, when infirmary nursing was practically non-existent, kindness of heart and human sympathy were unknown outside hospital walls, and to-day no one who is conversant with modern Poor-Law Infirmaries can fail to have been impressed with the kindly and sympathetic spirit prevailing amongst the medical and nursing staff, whether in those wards where the little children, in spite of their suffering, so often pass the happiest months of their lives, in the acute wards, when the accident, operation, and acute medical cases are tended with a skill and devotion which it would be hard to surpass; or in the wards set apart for those whose "eyes Death bandaged, forebore, and bade creep past," in all stages of paralysis and senile decrepitude.

In these latter wards especially the attitude of nurse and patient speaks for itself, and a visit to one of these Poor-Law Infirmaries, or a glance at the letters received by the ward sisters and nurses from patients they have nursed, or relatives who have noticed their kindly ministrations, would open Mr. Holland's eyes.

Consideration of expense and fear on the part of the Guardians of increasing the burden of the rates, do indeed cause a woeful under-staffing of infirmary wards, but Poor-Law Nurses (working as they do under great disadvantages) are second to none in their kindness, their sympathy, and their desire to do their very best for their patients.

I have spent the greater part of my professional life working in voluntary hospitals, and I can vouch from personal experience that the sympathetic treatment of the patients by a nurse in such hospital as St. Bartholomew's is not one whit greater than that of her sister in such an infirmary as this.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)