

yet so dependent on me, while asserting an absolute and divine right to all I did for her, I marvelled that God should entrust me with such a charge, that He did not keep the lovely creature in His own arms, and refuse her to any others. Then I would bethink myself that in giving her into mine, He had not sent her out of His own; for I, too, was a child in His arms, holding and tending my live doll, until it should grow something like me, only ever so much better. Was she not given to me that she might learn what I had begun to learn—namely, that a willing childhood was the flower of life? How can any mother sit with her child on her lap and not know that there is a God over all—know it by the rising of her own heart in prayer to Him? But so few have had parents like mine! If my mother felt thus when I lay in in her arms, it was no wonder I should feel thus when my child lay in mine.

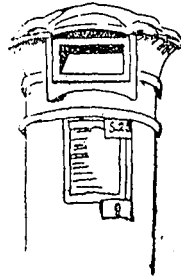
Before I had children of my own, I did not care about children, and therefore did not understand them; but I had read somewhere—and it clung to me, although I did not understand it—that it was in laying hold of the heart of His mother that Jesus laid His first hold on the world to redeem it; and now at length I began to understand it. What a divine way of saving us it was—to let her bear Him, carry Him in her bosom, wash Him and dress Him and nurse Him and sing Him to sleep—offer Him the adoration of a mother's love, misunderstand Him, chide Him, forgive Him even for fancied wrong! Such a love might well save a world in which were mothers enough. It was as if He had said, "Ye shall no more offer vain sacrifices to one who needs them not, and cannot use them. I will need them, so require them at your hands. I will hunger and thirst and be naked and cold, and ye shall minister to Me. Sacrifice shall be no more a symbol, but a real giving unto God; and when I return to the Father, inasmuch as ye do it to one of the least of these, ye do it unto Me." So all the world is henceforth the temple of God; its worship is ministration; the commonest service is divine service.

I feared at first that the new strange love I felt in my heart came only of the fact that the child was Percivale's and mine; but I soon found it had a far deeper source—that it sprang from the very humanity of the infant woman, yea, from her relation in virtue of that humanity to the Father of all. The fountain *appeared* in my heart: it arose from an infinite store in the unseen.

Soon, however, came jealousy of my love for my baby. I feared lest it should make me—nay, was making me neglect my husband. The fear

first arose in me one morning as I sat with her half dressed on my knees. I was dawdling over her in my fondness, as I used to dawdle over the dressing of my doll, when suddenly I became aware that never once since her arrival had I sat with my husband in his study. A pang of dismay shot through me. "Is this to be a wife?" I said to myself; "to play with a live love like a dead doll, and forget her husband!" I caught up a blanket from the cradle—I am not going to throw away that good old word for the ugly outlandish name they gave it now, reminding one only of a helmet—I caught up a blanket from the cradle, I say, wrapped it round the treasure, which was shooting its arms and legs in every direction like a polypus feeling after its food—and rushed down stairs, and down the precipice into the study. Percivale started up in terror, thinking something fearful had happened, and I was bringing him all that was left of the child.

(To be continued.)



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.

We shall be happy to answer, as far as we can, all questions submitted to us.

Communications, &c., not noticed in our present number will receive attention when space permits.

THE RECENT ESSAYS.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

SIR,—As I find by "Philosopher" that the subject of the late essays is not quite exhausted, I venture to say I think a little genuine criticism very valuable, but it should be administered in a little more friendly spirit. In spite of the censure that will be called down, I beg to offer, as my opinion, that the older *regime* which *still exists* of having Nurses of a well educated class of womanly women, and those of a higher education as Sisters, is the best. Accomplished ladies are out of place, and though I fear I shall never be forgiven for saying this, there is a determined effort being made to make the Hospital, its rules and regulations, suit the Nurses, rather than *vice versa*. "Mrs. Grundy" now permits a great deal more than she did some years ago, and to this fact chiefly is owing the great influx into the nursing world, and which is becoming over-stocked. "Ladies" can now take any position without loss of "caste." Is there now such a thing as loss of caste? Cooks, Nurses, housemaids, really drudges, if prefixed with the word "Lady" are recognised. The march of intellect has revolutionised the female world. One portion has already invaded the occupations supposed at one time to

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