

arms, her whole attitude a prayer. "I can't." The tears poured down.

Sabine had laid her plans carefully and no one suspected that she was other than she gave herself out to be—a war widow, married in haste to an Australian met on a brief holiday. In due time her child was born.

In the meanwhile old Miss Vallance had died and Sabine assumed the position of bailiff to the property during Mark's absence at the front.

Then followed the news of his wife's death. At last he was free to marry Sabine.

"The only fly in Sabine's honey pot of deep content was the postponement of Mark's leave, overdue and so deeply desired."

Then followed a disturbing wire from Mark to his old aunt, whom he knew to be dead some time since—and Sabine's visit to him in a hospital at Exeter, where, to her consternation, he did not recognise her, and his mind was blank so far as the last few years were concerned.

His home-coming is well described—his courteous treatment of Sabine whose position in the house somewhat bewildered him—his final succumbing afresh to her charming personality—his utter disbelief and horror of Sabine's story of their former love—the operation on his head which gradually restores his lost memory—all convincingly told.

But what should have proved perfect happiness was marred, as Mark points out, when he frankly owned regret for himself and her.

"It was wrong, we should have waited; it was Anthony's birth that opened my eyes. It's to Anthony we must look for judgment. We can never undo that wrong, Sabine. The responsibility was mine, but I longed for some sign from you of the same feeling. It altered my opinion of you—of the serious side of your character."

For the first time he owned Anthony as his flesh and blood, but behind the pride in his face was the pain he strove to disguise. A lump rose in the mother's throat. Never could Anthony call him father, and if marriage should result in further children, the first-born must be prepared to renounce his inheritance.

This was what "the breathless moment had brought to the pair she loved best."

We cannot, however, agree that it was a "breathless moment," as the situation was carefully thought out and deliberately planned by Sabine.

H. H.

COMING EVENTS.

January 15th.—Association of Trained Nurses in Public Health. Lecture by Miss Evelyn Cancellor on "Methods of Combating Venereal Disease," 10, Orchard Street, Portman Square, W. 3 p.m.

January 20th.—The Matrons' Council Annual Meeting. By kind invitation of Miss Marsters, Superintendent Q.V.J.I., Paddington and Marylebone District Nursing Association, 117, Sutherland Avenue, Maida Vale.

THE TALE OF THE YEARS.

Summer and winter and spring,
Heat and cold and the rain—
This is the tale the years bring,
Blessing and bane.
Labour and reaping that's sweet,
Twilight and day and the night,
Seed and the soil and the wheat,
Darkness and light.
God made His earth for man,
Home for a little span.
Sowing and gleaming and rest,
Sorrow and mirth and a smile,
Glow in the east—in the west,
Day for a while.
Flowers to garland the earth,
Flowers to lay o'er the dead,
Tears and some sighs and some mirth,
Earth for a bed.
God gives His call to man,
After a little span.

A. McGillicuddy, *The Canadian Nurse.*

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.

PRIVATE NURSES AND THE HOURS OF EMPLOYMENT BILL.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—I am glad that Miss MacCallum insists on the need for protection for private nurses. Although I am now a district nurse, I was "one of them" before the war, and I was amazed at the demands on one's time and good nature. A 12 hours' night duty usually stretched on till mid-day, waiting for the doctor by the relatives' request. But it is the time when a nurse is not on a case that is most often squandered by the Matron of the home. I was in a first-class Co-operative Association and when in from a case, no matter how heavy, a day off was unheard of, even when a number of nurses were in, one hour to go out in the day was the usual concession. My last case (after which I returned to war work) was a heart case and the wife was hopelessly drunk and pouring whisky into the poor patient. I was sent to *help* the lady nurse her husband. After struggling on for 36 hours, the lady (who was recovering) said I must ring up for a nurse and the Matron said there was no need as the lady arranged to relieve me. However, I got help and we had twelve solid hours on duty. At the end of a fortnight, a male nurse had to be got as things were impossible. I arrived at the home at 9 p.m. on a Saturday, and told Matron I was not fit for a case till Monday and would like to go home to sleep. There was no other nurse in, and of course we disagreed on the point of a needed rest.

"AULD REKIE."

[Private nursing should be organised on the co-operative principle with nurses on the committee.—ED.]

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