

What call was on them to be lovemaking? Or the scent on the apple blossom."

Alas for poor little Ann! Joe proved a "decent man." She liked him, too. But instead of liking him better with time, it's colder and colder she grew, as if the heart grew stiff within her.

And then Brian came on the scenes—Brian who answered to every note within her; Brian the patriot, "the whole world knowing that it's gathering the young men into a movement for lifting the country to its ancient grandeur he is.

If God only gave her Brian for a husband. But she mustn't think of him in that light. It was only the makings of a great friend Brian was."

Brian's image gradually obsessed her. She, imaginative to the tips of her fingers, saw him, and love through him, in every bit of nature.

There was Brian leaning now against the chaff-cutter. It's to kiss that moody look off his face she'd like to if he wasn't so much of a stranger and if God wasn't agin it. A great peace all over her. Just as if she could speak to him without saying a word and he'd understand everything . . . like as if he was her own mind speaking to her."

Her tender conscience troubled her sadly, and she in her distress goes to her old friend and confessor, Father John, to unburden her soul, and her arrival at the priest's house in the storm is a striking piece of writing.

It's gentler than ever he was, though a power of sadness that he tried to hide by poking the turf grew on him, till it's afeard she was that he had set fire to the chimney.

"Is there anything between ye?" he asked.

"There's a great love between us and a couple or three of kisses, or maybe more. It's in no state I was to keep count of them."

She couldn't hide the pride that was on her. But the thing itself or the way she said it hurt him. It's to look older and more hunched he did.

It was fighting for her life she was, and ready to put pain on man or God for the glory that was singing in her."

By degrees the old man showed her the nobler way, he not once throwing her sin at her head. Give your life for your friend. The pride she'd have in seeing him grow a great man.

She'd give heaven and earth, her soul, everything to touch his hair once . . . sinking out of life she was.

The hand of God was on her brow . . . the hand of a human being, and she near pushed to the edge of the world.

"God will help you.

It's to smile at him she could, and feel grateful for the loving heart of him she got back in his look."

Ann went back meaning to make a brave fight, and it is a pathetic picture drawn of the woman who yet could not bring herself to regard the exaltation of her great love as sin.

We heartily commend this gem to our readers; it is a dull soul that will fail to discern its rare beauty.

H. H.

COMING EVENTS.

September 9th.—Final of the "Ross" Lawn Tennis Challenge Cup. Park Hospital, Hither Green. 2.30 p.m.

September 22nd.—General Nursing Council for England and Wales. Monthly Meeting. Ministry of Health, Whitehall, S.W. 2.30 p.m.

September 25th.—Royal Sanitary Institute, 90, Buckingham Palace Road, S.W.1. Introductory Lecture to the Students in the several courses of Lectures arranged by the Institute for the Autumn Session by Louis C. Parkes, Esq., M.D., D.P.H., Chairman of the Council. Admission free. 5.30 p.m.

September 25th to 29th.—National Council of Women of Great Britain and Ireland. Annual Meeting and Conference. Guildhall, Cambridge.

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 WIND FROM THE WILDERNESS.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—May I thank you very much for your exceedingly kind review of my book, "A Wind from the Wilderness"? It is a review like that that rewards an author for taking pains.

As a matter of fact I always take pains, but your reviewer, "H. H.," has done what so few people ever do, understood exactly what I meant and was trying to say, and his—or is it her?—praise has consequently gone straight to my heart.

Again I thank you, and I am,

Sincerely yours,

MARY GAUNT.

Via Sant' Ampeglio,
Bordighera.

[We feel sure "H. H." (Miss Henrietta Hawkins) will welcome, as we do, this appreciative letter from Miss Mary Gaunt. "A Wind from the Wilderness" is a delightful book, especially to those of us who are interested in that wonderful race, the Chinese—so inscrutable, so divinely artistic. When we touch with a worshipping hand a rose-backed bit of egg-shell with seven borders, we marvel at the exquisite fairy fingers which produced it and realise that we are not "all highest" where fine arts are concerned in our association with the Chinese.—ED.]

SMOKING IN BED.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—In connection with the increasing habit of smoking amongst nurses, several points are obvious. Does not a nurse who smokes lose most of her influence as a health teacher by her tacit admission that she has become a slave of the tobacco habit, which, as the result of medical

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)