

"Men are wanted, and always will be—proper men like you."

"Nurse," he said, "I'll get a job if I die for it."

"Get a job and live for it," answered the nurse.

"Here's luck."

Post-war conditions obliged the Earl of Ottery to put up his country seat for sale, and was an occasion for Joyce to rush home to learn the heart-breaking truth from her father. The exclusive home circle made Bertram feel more in the cold than ever, and the final crisis was brought about when he refused a remunerative post from one of Joyce's "set."

In brief, it was a Government job, organised to "teach Labour a lesson."

Joyce was watching her husband. She could read his face better than the others. She saw how first he flushed and then paled a little.

"Exceedingly kind of you, general," he said slowly, "but I don't like the job. It's like this: I don't like to see people of our class—your class, if you like—organising their forces to beat down poor devils who want to keep up a decent standard of life after a war they helped to win."

His eye met Joyce's. "I hate the idea of it," he said.

He was to decide between Joyce's "crowd" and the labouring classes of England. It would be the sale of his intelligence for the sake of position and peace with Joyce—a sin against the Light.

Joyce tells him: "You're a traitor to the things I stand for—to all that I am. Until you do something to put yourself right again I won't live with you! It's dishonouring!"

He was white to the lips with anguish and rage. This girl used her tongue like a lash. She cut his heart open and flayed his soul. And yet, as she stood there facing him, he loved her with an extreme passion, and her beauty was a torture to him.

The next morning he went to his mother's house in Sloane Street and asked for his old room.

The author is much to be admired for the perfectly fair way he treats the difficult problems with which he deals. The book covers so much ground that it is not possible to treat the whole even in the most cursory fashion, and it deserves careful and close reading.

Those of our readers who remember the thrilling articles by Philip Gibbs during the war will expect great things from this book, and they will not be disappointed. It is education on points of view.

H. H.

### COMING EVENTS.

February 16th.—Meeting General Nursing Council for England and Wales. Ministry of Health, Whitehall, S.W. 2.30 p.m.

February 17th.—Royal British Nurses' Association, Ramblers' Club, Tour of the Victoria and Albert Museums, 3 p.m.

February 20th and 21st.—Central Poor Law Conference, Guildhall, London, E.C.

### 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.*

#### FOUND TO BE INCOMPETENT.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

MADAM,—The paragraph in your Journal of January 27th, concerning the Bath Board of Guardians and the Royal United Hospital, is misleading with regard to the facts of the case, and unfair to the nursing staff of this hospital. There is no truth in the assertion that the presence of the four nurses sent to the hospital by the Workhouse Infirmary for surgical training was resented by the hospital nurses. They were cordially received and kindly treated.

On the occasion of their departure from the hospital, three of them expressed to the Sister of the wards, and myself, their thanks for the training they had received from us, and their appreciation of the advantages they had gained during their year in the hospital. Each of these three nurses stated their wish to remain longer with us should the Guardians approve. One was in tears at the prospect of leaving. One was unsatisfactory in her behaviour at the hospital; but the other three worked well and appeared to be contented and happy.

Unfortunately it was found that neither of these nurses, when they came to us, had any real training or experience in practical nursing, although they had passed the examination held under the auspices of the Guardians, and it was found absolutely necessary to place them in the position of probationers.

At our qualifying examination in October last three of them failed in a hopeless manner, the fourth absented herself from examination against orders and subsequently had to be suspended from duty until she apologised for her conduct.

These nurses now state that they were unhappy during the whole of their stay with us. Their self-control in hiding from us their real state of mind and preserving an aspect of cheerfulness and content for a whole year is very remarkable.

Doubtless it was disappointing for them to realise that the training they had acquired at the Infirmary was of less value than they had believed; but this was their misfortune, and neither their fault nor ours. The truth of the matter is that the Guardians and their officials were naturally vexed that the nurses who had passed the Infirmary examination were found by us to be incompetent, and this is the source of the whole trouble.

The fact that the Guardians should try to make it appear to the public that they had withdrawn their nurses from the hospital because they were unkindly treated by the Nursing Staff, is to me not so surprising as that the report of the meeting

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