

THE SOCIAL SIDE.

The members of the Congress and their friends were entertained in the Royal Pavilion at a reception by the Mayor and Mayoress of Brighton, Alderman and Mrs. Stafford. About 600 members of the Conference accepted the invitation, and spent a very pleasant time.

Tea parties were largely attended during the week; the account of the reception at the Nurses' Home of Rest appears elsewhere.

Woman's Suffrage.

Miss Helen Blackburn kindly draws our attention to the omission made in our issue of the 20th ult. in reference to Woman's Suffrage in Australia. She points out that the women of Western Australia, as well as those of South Australia, are now enfranchised, and will therefore be entitled to vote for members of the new Federal Parliament. So much the better—as the women of both these colonies, instead of one, can bring effective pressure to bear in helping to procure the parliamentary vote for their sisters in Victoria and New South Wales—colonies which at present most unjustly deny this right to women. And then when all these dear colonial daughters are free, surely they can easily smash the manacles which fetter their "mother" in that "little island in the North Sea," blood of whose blood has surged through the mightiest Empire the world has ever seen.

A Book of the Week.

QUISANTE.*

It is admittedly a very difficult thing successfully to put into words those small traits which disclose the fact that a man is not quite a gentleman. They are sometimes so subtle as almost to elude analysis; and it is possible to be convinced, before you have been two minutes in a man's company, that there is something "not quite"; but to be unable to explain to anyone else in what the "not-quitiness" consisted. In a gay and light-hearted way, Mrs. Wallord succeeded wonderfully in drawing for us the portrait of such a man, in her novel "A Stiff-necked Generation." She accomplished it by a mass of small details, carefully observed and admirably chronicled; she gave us her hero's good points, which were many; she gave us those trying little solecisms which are so curiously hard to forgive. Mr. Hope's Quisante is a man of another kind. He has genius, which Major Gilbertson had not; he is also unscrupulous, which Major Gilbertson was not. One would have thought the genius, joined to a most intense desire to get on, would have supplied the tact necessary to keep him from social pitfalls. Or, again, one might have thought the consuming love for a woman who was quite thoroughbred, and who became his wife, might have been strong enough to hold the unscrupulousness in check. But it is not.

We are told that Quisante was a genius, but we see for ourselves as we read the book, that he was three parts a knave; and, "because things seen are mightier than things heard," we understand full well why Lady Richard hated, but not in the very least why May Gaston loved him.

* By Anthony Hope. Methuen.

Mr. Hope has attempted a difficult task, and we regret to own that we consider his book a very interesting, very able failure. It is quite possible to figure to ourselves a man who at the same time attracts and repels; who is sometimes so brilliant as to dazzle and sometimes so underbred as to disgust. But he has not put this before us. He takes care to *show* us that the man was disgusting, he merely *tells* us that he was brilliant.

May's life-long infatuation remains unexplained. The man's very love for her is totally unexplained. If he was capable of loving her in the manner described, not sensuously, but with the very highest part of him, he must have been capable of great good.

Anthony Hope makes him completely uninfluenced in his career by the woman for whom he would have sacrificed so much.

For all this, the book is intensely interesting. The author has all his old charm of dialogue. He makes his politics fascinating, and one cannot resist the belief that he could have made Quisante fascinating too, had he tried.

The character reminded me curiously of Richard, the husband in Mrs. Hodgson Burnett's masterpiece, "Through One Administration." All who read that clever book will remember the charming and unscrupulous Richard, who used his noble wife as a decoy, to do his lobbying. Richard was not a genius; but the feelings which Quisante stirred in the breast of his wife were not unlike those of Bertha, when she simply remarked to her husband that he had not spared her.

As in all this author's books, the minor parts are well sketched in. The Dean, Mrs. Baxter, Morewood the painter, and several others are life-like studies from nature. As for Quisante himself, he is too life-like. He has probably been done from life, and overdone in consequence. He is really almost the only person in the book who never says anything brilliant from cover to cover; and one is told that his genius was the one thing that excused him!

One feels a sense of outrage such as one might have, if a book related how a man committed murder, but was not to blame, because he had a fearfully strong reason so to do; but omitted to tell us, all through the book, what the reason was.

G. M. R.

What to Read.

- "Life and Letters of Thomas Henry Huxley." By his son, Leonard Huxley.
- "Our House of Commons: Its Realities and Romance." By Alfred Kinnear.
- "French Architects and Sculptors of the 18th Century." By Lady Dilke.
- "The Story of Egypt." By W. Basil Worsfold.
- "Woings and Weddings in Many Climes." By Louise Jordan Mills.
- "A Vizier's Daughter." By Lillias Hamilton, M.D.
- "The Heart's Highway." By Mary E. Wilkins.
- "In the Palace of the King: A Love Story of Old Madrid." By Francis Marion Crawford.
- "The Journal of a Jealous Woman." By Percy White.
- "The Flower of the Flock." By W. E. Norris.

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