

where, as in other laboratories, experience must bring wisdom. The failures of democracy bring their own remedy in the greater wisdom of the people. If voting has this effect on man, we have a right to expect similar results from the extension of the suffrage to women."

"A DAY OFF DUTY."

For a really restful, and in all ways delightful day, I would recommend a tired nurse to try Epping Forest.

The shortest and least expensive route is to book from Liverpool Street to Chingford, the return fare only amounting to 1s.

Arrived at Chingford, it is worth while, before starting for the Forest, to go and see the old parish church, which is about twenty minutes' walk from the station. The church is close on 1,000 years old, and has not been used for worship for about fifty years on account of its unsafe condition. The caretaker looks in keeping with the ancient building, being a tottering old man of eighty-three years of age, who tells the visitor in excellent language all that there is to learn about the quaint old edifice.

Returning by the main road, one passes the station and walks as far as the edge of the Forest, where Queen Elizabeth's Hunting Lodge is situated. This is now a museum, and really interesting to anyone who is fond of curiosities.

The Lodge is a simple-looking cottage, with a small garden in front; the staircase is the original one of Queen Elizabeth's time, the stairs being wide and shallow and made of oak. History relates that when the Queen used the Lodge she was in the habit of riding her pony up these stairs to the rooms above. The feat I should think was possible; the probability of its performance strikes one as doubtful. The view from the upper windows is charming, and shows miles and miles of thickly-wooded forest land, belonging to the Royal domain.

Among the interesting items in the Lodge are some beautiful pieces of tapestry, an antique grandfather's clock, and some bits of ancient pottery, while a number of cases are filled with old weapons, and tools which have been dug up in the Forest, some of which are said to be relics of pre-historic times.

After the Hunting Lodge has been inspected, the visitor should cross the grass in the direction of the Connaught Water, a small and very pretty lake interspersed with islands. This piece of water was named after the Duke of Connaught, as a remembrance of his visit to the Forest, when he opened a further portion of the ground for the use of the public, in the Jubilee year of 1897. A few boats are in readiness to convey the visitor round the lake, and quite a pleasant twenty minutes can be spent on the water for the sum of two-pence.

After that, the most restful way of passing the time is just to loiter about the Forest, the beauties of which are quite sufficient to compensate for any lack of further entertainment. Still, if the visitor feels disposed, a delightful drive can be taken on a brake as far as High Beech, the highest point in the county of Essex. The drive extends for a distance of 3½ miles, and is all the way through forest scenery; this luxury can be obtained for the sum of one shilling return fare.

LUCY M. RAE.

A Book of the Week.

THE MILL OF SILENCE.*

This book may be said to furnish an admirable example of the tendency of novel-writers to fall by an exaggeration of qualities which have been the cause of their first success.

"The Lake of Wine" achieved an instant and well-deserved reputation, because it had the power to give a distinct and most weird thrill of creepiness. The horror in it was not stage horror; it was a real product of a real mood, or mental habit in the writer; it seemed to ooze from his words and phrases, to lie like autumn twilight, dank and chill over the whole landscape, and the actors who moved in it. In the "Comte de la Murette," the writer soared still higher, to the thinking of the present reviewer. He focussed the light of his curious qualities upon a scene which was well fitted for their exercise; he chose the French Revolution, and the result was a tale not wholly without human sympathy, though grisly enough in all conscience; a thing spontaneous, not worked up with the view of book-making; a thing which doubtless haunted the author as much as it did the reader. In "Love like a Gipsy" Mr. Capes abandoned his more lurid style, and, for whatever reason, the book fell flat; now it is as though he felt—"My public likes to sup on horrors; very well then, I can satisfy it, as Guido Reni boasted he could touch his, by the mere trick of casting up his model's eyes."

Here we have a haunted mill, a raving miller with two or three mysterious secrets, a devilish doctor, a heartless villain, a cripple half-mad with the knowledge that his own father crippled and tried to murder him, a toothless and gibbering old beldame who practises witchcraft, and a young woman who enters the family with the calmness and lack of baggage of Hilda Wangel in the "Master Builder" and says she has no soul.

Having chosen these promising ingredients, Mr. Capes proceeds to serve them hot and strong, stirring briskly all the time. At first he does not stir too fast, and the secret of the mill-wheel and the quarrels of the three young men over the Changeling promise some acute passages. But the movements of the puppets are all forced; their dancing grows spasmodic. There is no reason whatever for the devilish hate with which Jason, the eldest son, pursues Renalt, the second, who is the teller of the tale. Renalt loves Zyp, the changeling, and is really the one beloved by her. Jason schemes to get Renalt out of the way in disgrace, and after two or three years succeeds in robbing him of Zyp. Then, for no cause that can be seen, he comes to London, bringing with him his wife and child, and proceeds to seduce the young girl whom Renalt is growing to love—out of the sheer superabundance of his own wickedness, since what love he has appears to be given to Zyp. This may be possible, but it is not artistic.

His hounding down by the remorseless cripple might also be artistic, but it is overdone. One wears at last of corpses and fearful storms, and explosions, and ravings of the elements, and nights of tragedy, and victims of the mill-wheel, and curses and hatred and deathbed confessions.

The secret of the miller's eccentricities turns out to

* By Bernard Capes. John Long.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)