

the ordinary criminal law, and to do this in regard to labour all that was wanted was knowledge and the magnificent organisation of the churches. Something was being done in this direction, but more was needed. There were trades, too, such as home workers, shop girls, and children employed outside school hours, for which legislation was needed, and in this direction she appealed also for the help of the churches.

The Bishop of Rochester, in the course of a warm commendation of Miss Tuckwell's paper, suggested that the parochial clergy might "industrialise" their parish workers if these were called together, and that someone with Miss Tuckwell's knowledge should be asked to speak on the evils under which women toilers suffered, or that a doctor might give an address on practical sanitation.

A Book of the Week.

THE SHEEP-STEALERS.*

It is with the warmest feeling of admiration that we welcome a new novelist of such unquestionably high order, and more especially on account of her sex. Miss Jacob has, without doubt, a future before her. Her book is original, strong, pure, without being in the least namby-pamby, and simple with the simplicity which is strength.

This is no society *soufflé*, no literary piece of gymnastics, written with one eye on the critics. There is no trace of the preciosity which disfigures most of the writing of the moment. There is no whisper of decadence, none of that fatiguing sense that the writer was grown up before she was born, no echoes of the latest scandal, no single destroying breath of the book-maker.

Violet Jacob wrote her vigorous book because she had a story to tell, because she had well seen and faithfully observed the men and women and the face of the land where her lot was cast. The mine of quiet local observation, and the faculty of translating impressions into forcible, temperate English, is more suggestive of George Eliot than of any more recent writer. The borderland between Western England and Wales is comparatively untrodden ground to most English people. The author has chosen a period when a special interest brought those remote and sleepy counties into a momentary prominence—the so-called "Rebecca" riots, which arose with regard to the making of toll-gates upon certain roads hitherto free, and constituted a very real grievance to the inhabitants of Herefordshire and the adjacent fringe of Wales.

The only sign of immaturity is a healthy one: the author has had, in the result, more material than she has quite known how to handle. No words can tell how dear is this fault to the jaded reviewer, accustomed of late to the merest trickles from the rills of Parnassus, to writers who labour over their manner with their matter so slender that indeed it needs much treatment to eke it out.

Rhys Walters, the spoilt only son of a farmer of large means, becomes the villain of the story, in a manner strangely like life. He has led a wildish life for some years, one of his worst actions having been to seduce the beautiful Mary Vaughan, servant at the

"Dipping Pool" Inn. This girl is the daughter of the old man who keeps the toll-gate. When Rhys consents to enact the part of "Rebecca" in the coming riot, his intention is hardly more than that of adventure; but the devil to whom he has of late lent a willing ear steps in and takes the turn of events almost out of his hands. Mary's father falls, struck down, as Rhys believes, by his own hand; and thenceforward the well-to-do young farmer becomes the murderer flying from justice; and poor Mary's wrongs are indeed avenged seven-fold. Woven in with the love of George Williams for Mary—which love enables him to forswear sheep-stealing and lead an honest life, and to shake off the iron hand of the wicked old butcher, Bumpett—is the story of the love of honest Harry Fenton for the worthless Miss Isoline Ridge-way; and this introduces us to one delightful character—the old parson Lewis, scholar and gentleman to his finger-tips. His diagnosis of the character of his beautiful niece is terribly accurate.

The story would have been more impressive had Rhys Walters been made aware of the fact that he was not in reality the murderer he thought himself to be; and had he returned to the world of men to trouble the future career of Mrs. Harry Fenton. But the author has chosen another way.

It is much to be hoped that she will shortly produce other work as broad, clean, vigorous, and convincing as "The Sheep-Stealers."

G. M. R.

What to Read.

"Donovan Pasha and Some People of Egypt." By Sir Gilbert Parker.

"My Australian Girlhood." Mrs. Campbell Praed's autobiography.

"The Little White Bird." By J. M. Barrie.

"The Intrusions of Peggy." By Anthony Hope.

"The Depths of Deliverance." By F. Van Eeden.

"The Burges Letters; a Record of Child Life in the Sixties." By Edna Lyall.

Coming Events.

October 24th.—Meeting Provisional Committee Society for the State Registration of Trained Nurses, 20, Upper Wimpole Street, 5 p.m.

October 25th.—Royal Progress of their Majesties the King and Queen through the streets of London.

October 26th.—Their Majesties attend the Coronation Thanksgiving Service at St. Paul's Cathedral.

October 28th to 31st.—The Conference of the National Union of Women Workers of Great Britain and Ireland in St. Cuthbert's Halls, Edinburgh—President, the Lady Battersea—including Meeting of the National Council of Women of Great Britain and Ireland, October 30th, 10.30 to 1.

October 29th.—Mrs. Bedford Fenwick speaks on State Registration of Trained Nurses, Glasgow.

October 30th.—Quarterly Meeting of the Matrons' Council, The Matron's House, St. Bartholomew's Hospital, 4 p.m.

November 5th.—"The State Registration of Trained Nurses." Address by Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, Women's Institute, 92, Victoria Street, S.W., 4 p.m.

* By Violet Jacob. Heinemann.

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