

The Royal Academy of Music Sauret Prize has been awarded to Miss Amy M. Inglis, of London. Miss Mary F. D. Dickenson is highly commended, and Miss Margaret Sutton commended.

Lady Henry Somerset has resigned the position of President of the National British Women's Temperance Association after fourteen years of active work on its behalf. Regret for her loss is universal.

The great biennial meeting of women's temperance societies all over the world will be held in the second week in June at Geneva.

In the House of Commons, Mr. Norman asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies if his attention had been called to the case of the two English girls from Bilston, named Laura and Agnes Hyslop, who were taken under arrest through the streets of Cape Town by the police, charged with absenting themselves from their employment, and subsequently discharged by the magistrate on the ground that they had been sufficiently punished by this exposure; and, if so, will he say if he can take any steps to prevent in the future such action, as calculated to deter young women from emigrating to South Africa?

Mr. Chamberlain's answer was evasive; he is well aware that the conditions of domestic labour for women in Cape Colony are dangerous to the liberty of the subject, as their "masters" have power to imprison them for breach of contract. It is high time the South African Colonisation Society made this fact quite plain to the young women whom they encourage to emigrate to Cape Colony for domestic service, or insisted upon an alteration in the law. Imagine young, inexperienced girls in a foreign land compelled to remain for months in situations where they may be most unfairly treated, and threatened with jail and disgrace if they refuse to submit. Under such circumstances the Kaffir just scoots; but then he knows the ropes, whilst the white woman colonist is at the mercy of any unscrupulous slave-driver in whose employ she may be. If our "self-governing colonies" have tyrannous laws where British women are concerned, it is the duty of the Colonial Office to interfere. We have heard of several intolerable cases of late—a state of things which is bound to continue until such time as women refuse to emigrate to any colony where they are unenfranchised.

Mr. Henry H. Bonnell has brought out a series of essays entitled "Charlotte Brontë, George Eliot, Jane Austen: Studies in their Works." His study of Charlotte Brontë is "A Study of Passion," that of George Eliot is named "The Literature of Power and the Cup of Strength," of Jane Austen "The Exquisite Touch."

The sale of genuine old bric-à-brac held recently at 16, Brook Street, Grosvenor Square, was so successful that it was extended for two additional days. The sale was organised by a Committee to enable poor ladies who desire to realise the current value of old family possessions to do so to the best advantage. The many lovely things received by the Committee proved that the scheme met a real need, while the support accorded to the sale was most encouraging.

A Book of the Week.

TRENT'S TRUST.*

A breath of the tender grace of a day that is gone seems to pass lingeringly by us as we take up these last touches of the vanished hand, which was the hand of a master.

We recall, some of us, the exquisite delight of our first reading of "The Luck of Roaring Camp," or "Left out on Lone Star Mountain," or "Tennessee's Pardner." We hear the click of Yuba Bill's whip as the mail coach swings into the pioneer town; we see the long stretch of the Sierras, and the low adobe walls of the Mission Station, and the sound of the Angelus bell floats towards us, interrupted perchance by the war-whoop of Indians; and the young school-marm, smiling, has passed by over the blue-grass plains, followed by the meditative, respectful, regretful smile of Jack Hamlin, perhaps the most peculiarly his own of all Bret Harte's creations.

And in this volume here is Jack Hamlin himself resuscitated for us in his habit as he lived. We forget the death of the outcast on Poker Flat, and turn with ardour to this most characteristic chapter in Jack's history. The notorious gambler has been ill. His doctor sends him to convalesce on Windy Hill, above the pines, in the strictly Presbyterian household of one Seth Rivers. Poor Jack! Here is the account of his bewildered waking on the morning after his arrival, under the effect of an opiate, at the Ranch.

"Presently he saw the door open slowly. It gave admission to the small, round face and yellow ringlets of a little girl, and finally to her whole figure, clasping a doll nearly as large as herself. For a moment she stood there, arrested by the display of Mr. Hamlin's dressing-case on the table. Then her glances moved around the room and rested on the bed. Her blue eyes and Mr. Hamlin's brown ones met and mingled. Without a moment's hesitation she moved to the bedside. Taking her doll's hand she displayed it before him.

"'Isn't it pitty?'"

"Mr. Hamlin was instantly his old self again. Thrusting his hand comfortably under the pillow, he lay on his side and gazed at it long and affectionately. 'I never,' he said, in a faint voice, but with immovable features, 'saw anything so perfectly beautiful. Is it alive?'"

"'It's a dolly,' she returned gravely, smoothing down its frock and straightening its helpless feet. Then, seized with a spontaneous idea like a young animal, she suddenly presented it to him with both hands and said:

"'Kiss it.'"

"Mr. Hamlin imprinted a chaste salute on its vermilion cheek. 'Would you mind letting me hold it for a little?' he said, with extreme diffidence.

"The child was delighted, as he expected. Mr. Hamlin placed it in a sitting posture on the edge of his bed, and put an ostentatious paternal arm around it."

Space is wanting to add the account of how Mr. Hamlin taught the High Town Church members to play poker. It is quite inimitable. Our good old friend Colonel Starbottle is once more in evidence in another of the stories. The first, "Trent's Trust," is spoilt by being hurried. The idea is extremely good. The last story of all is a fascinating one, in which the

* Bret Harte, Eveleigh Nash.

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