

development of women demands the conscientious examination of women's claims to be placed upon political equality with men.

The President of the new League is Mrs. Chapman Catt, representing America; the Vice-President, Fräulein Anita Augspurg, representing Germany; the Deputy Vice-President is Mrs. Fawcett, the leader of the female suffrage movement in Great Britain; the Secretary is Mrs. Forster Avery, an American lady; and the Treasurer, Mrs. Roger Cunliffe, a British delegate.

### A Book of the Week.

#### SOULS IN BONDAGE.\*

Mr. Gibbon comes upon the horizon of the novel-reader with considerable gifts. His journalistic training has made him terse, if it betrays him now and then into tinsel and balderdash. His mind moves pictorially, and he understands the effect of brushwork to a nicety. Moreover, he is in some ways original, and to say this nowadays is to say much, when every walk of life seems to be so amply covered by the dissecting pen of the modern novelist. A few of the faults of the beginner—such as the inevitable pessimism—conceded, we award the praise of originality with no hesitation to this story of the tragedy of the half-caste, or "off-coloured" race in Africa—half Boer, half Kaffir! The blend, to judge from the picture here drawn for us, is an almost unsurpassably bad one. We have given us the picture of two strong men—George Joyce, the transport rider, and Bantam, the "off-coloured" groom. In Bantam the result of his strength is incredibly evil; he has, in its fulness, the traditional curse of the vices of both races, the virtues of neither. He is a devil, but a convincing one. His wooing of poor Cecilia is so wonderfully told that it well-nigh deceives the reader into thinking that the man is in earnest; that the delicate, high-minded girl has touched a chord in the savage nature which will vibrate responsive. Joyce, on the contrary, finds his salvation in his strength. His little idyll forms a welcome relief to the grim horrors of poor Cecilia's fate. Mr. Gibbon is most strongly of opinion that the right way to govern savages is by the methods which appeal to them; the unsparing use of force, tempered with strict justice. The swift recompense for the offence, the licking administered as one administers it to a dog, so that the relation between cause and effect may be clearly perceived.

The character of old Thwaites, the lawyer, is a little hard to understand. It is drawn well, but does not quite convince. It is probably a study from the life, with the thing which would render it coherent left out—namely, the reason which brought him to what he is when the tale opens. We need a clue, such as is afforded by Kipling in his masterly story of the castaway European with the Hottentot wife—"Not guilty, my lord!"

We hear that Mr. Blackwood has another novel by this most interesting writer in the press, and shall look for it with eagerness.

Meanwhile, we notice one curious thing which seems worth calling attention to. The book is, from end to end, frankly and openly irreligious. This in

itself is nothing to wonder at—most books now are; most are written from the external standpoint, and do not touch upon what may be called the *realities*, brimmed though they are with *realism*. We naturally do not quarrel with an author for his standpoint; but we do hold that, being wholly uninformed on a certain subject, he had better not talk about it. If he were conscious of knowing nothing about art, he would not risk the remark that Titian was among the greater Greek painters, or, being unscientific, he would hesitate before saying that Huxley's discovery of spontaneous generation had revolutionised medicine. But when it comes to religion, he blunders as deeply as this with a gay unconcern which is extremely funny. He gives us a most vivid picture of a Roman priest *celebrating Mass at sunset!!!* Not only that, but he delivers himself with conviction of the following expression of opinion:—

"Rome bred a genius when her priest invented the use of incense."

Great, indeed, is Rome in her knowledge of the need of human hearts; but the human heart found out its need of incense a trifle of seven or eight thousand years before Rome was founded. What we complain of is, that Mr. Gibbon would be ashamed of such desperate ignorance in any other branch of knowledge. He probably assumes, however, that his readers will be in the same boat as himself as regards this one.

G. M. R.

### In Italy.

O day in June, outpaced by time's swift marches,  
Still through my day-dreams sigh  
Thy vagrant winds, and over me still arches  
The glowing Lombard sky.  
On Como's shore I lie, while life's span dwindles  
To one short afternoon,  
And in my heart the sacred fire rekindles,  
O day in June!

\* \* \* \* \*

O day in June, what care I for to-morrow,  
Since in the years thou hast  
Thy certain place, and I may always borrow  
Thy glory from the past?  
Life's ills are more than gold or fame may leaven,  
But thou, my one sure boon,  
Canst make for me an ever-present heaven,  
O day in June!

FRANK ROE BATCHELDER, in the *Munsey*.

### Coming Events.

June 12th.—Hospital Sunday.

June 15th.—Princess Louise Duchess of Argyll opens a bazaar in the grounds of Bruce Castle, Tottenham, in aid of Tottenham Hospital.

June 21st.—The Queen is to be present at the opening of Lady Cadogan's bazaar in aid of the Victoria Hospital for Children, Royal Albert Hall.

June 13th to 18th.—International Congress of Women, Berlin.

June 17th.—Meeting of the International Council of Nurses, Victoria Lyceum, Potsdamer Str., Berlin, 10 a.m.

\* By Percival Gibbon. (Wm. Blackwood and Son.)

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