

beneath the picture hats. I don't know where in any given fifteen minutes I can see so many joyless faces. Assuredly these things are as they should be. None can take God's sweet holy gift of life and vulgarise it into a plaything, and escape satiety and ennui in the long run. Where Solomon and Chesterfield failed the butterflies of Mayfair are not likely to succeed. Only in God's will is man's tranquillity.—*Bishop of Burnley.*

Book of the Week.

"THE LADDER TO THE STARS."*

It is with hearty pleasure that we welcome another book from the hand that penned the "Green Graves of Balgowrie." Readers who do me the honour to read my small reflections on books from week to week, will remember that it is one of my hobbies to hold that pessimism is a sign of youth. Miss Findlater is so obliging as to confirm my pet theory. Her first book was imbued with a pessimism so deep that it lingered in the mind, hauntingly, unforgettably. Now the author has seen more of the world, and "The Ladder to the Stars," though by no means a hilarious book, yet breathes a note of hope.

It is a wonderful gift, the power possessed by both the Misses Findlater, of making the quietest narrative interesting. There is a charm of clearness, of clean-cut accuracy in all their descriptions, which makes every sentence hold the attention. The Pillar family form a very wonderful study, and one of a more or less unusual kind. They belong to those middle-class provincial people, who seem to be dissenters in some mysterious manner connected with their precise social standing.

There is the elderly aunt, Mrs. Pillar, who is housekeeper to Sir Samuel Joyce—a position considered somewhat derogatory by her nephews and nieces, yet fraught with a fearful kind of joy, as a means of hearing all the gossip about the county families and their doings.

"The well-married young Pillars confessed to each other (but never, never to outsiders) that their Aunt Pillar's position was a trial to them. For it was impossible to ignore the fact that, powerful as her sway at the Manor might be, she was herself a servant, albeit an upper one. By a sort of tacit consent, they never invited Aunt Pillar to their houses when they had company, but sometimes they allowed themselves an afternoon of fearful joy. One of the sisters would invite her on a day when no one else was likely to be there, and then (the other sisters assembling by pre-arrangement), in the seclusion of the dining-room they gossiped freely with her over the great people of the Manor—their doings, their visitors, their dresses.

With her nieces Aunt Pillar had positively no reserves. She would descend to the most petty detail imaginable—which of the ladies wore false hair, whether this one disposed of her old dresses or gave them to her maid, whether that one gave out as many garments to be washed as another—all was grist to the mill of the gossip, and sitting round the little dining-table, elbows on board, the young women feasted on these scraps of information as eagerly as hounds on meat.

* By Jane Helen Findlater. (Methuen)

One member of this family is Miriam Sadler, the Ugly Duckling. As all her cousins are handsome and common, she is plain and even more than clever. Naturally enough she becomes embroiled with the whole powerful clan, one after another. They mean well, they are jealous for the family honour, as clannish as the most ancient families, eager to hide Miriam's deficiencies and eccentricities from the eyes of their little world. It is all excellently given. One seems to be living at Hindcup and to be experiencing all the shocks which the inconsiderate Miriam showered upon her respectable and horror-struck relatives.

Miriam herself is perhaps not wholly a success. But to depict the early life of a genius is always a difficult task.

What Miss Findlater does succeed in painting for us is the hopelessness of intellect appealing to self-satisfied stupidity, the helplessness of refinement, with prosperous vulgarity arrayed against it. Pre-eminently a book for thoughtful women to read.

G. M. R.

A Little Creed.

The one false word of life is Ichabod.

The glory is not departed :

They lie who say it, being heavy hearted.

The glory was here ; the glory is hid with God.

All glories that we lose, or we forego,

Some day shall find us, this I surely know.

—From *Selected Poems*,

By NORA CHESSON.

Coming Events.

October 12th.—Society of Women Journalists. Mrs. Flora Annie Steel will discuss "The Office of the New Broom." October 20th, Miss Ella Curtis will speak on "Style."

October 13th.—Hospital Saturday. Special Collection.

October 17th.—Guild of St. Luke. Service at St. Paul's Cathedral. 7.30 p.m.

October 22nd to 26th.—National Union of Women Workers' Annual Conference at Tunbridge Wells. Annual Meeting of National Council of Women of Great Britain and Ireland, October 23rd and 24th.

October 25th.—Central Midwives' Board Examination at the Examination Hall, Victoria Embankment, W.C.

October 26th.—Annual Meeting of Certified Midwives' Total Abstinence League, Chapter House, St. Paul's Cathedral, St. Paul's Churchyard, E.C., at 3.30 p.m.; tea 4.30.

October 29th.—Meeting of Councillors, the International Council of Nurses, to make preliminary arrangements for the Nursing Conference in Paris in June, 1907. 431, Oxford Street. 4.0 p.m.

A Word for the Week.

"Oh, do not pray for easy lives. Pray to be stronger men. Do not pray for tasks equal to your powers. Pray for powers equal to your tasks. Then the doing of your work shall be no miracle. But you shall be a miracle. Every day you shall wonder at yourself, at the richness of life which has come to you by the grace of God."—*The Fight for Character*

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