

But "The Contest" is so far above the writer's recent output as to raise the highest hopes for her future work.

The carelessness and the loquacity have disappeared at one stroke, and there is unfolded in the course of the story a tale of English provincial life, bearing the stamp of fidelity on every page.

The rather tame opening chapters must not deter the reader from going on. The whole subject of the tale is worthy of study, and it is treated with a grasp of detail and outline which are quite admirable.

Nona Stapleton is the young lady of the big house. She has been quite nicely brought up to study music and do district visiting, in the most approved county fashion. Her music and her philanthropy both suffer from the woeful lack of thoroughness, of some definite guiding principle, some accurate knowledge of the things studied, which is the curse of women reared on these usual lines.

But, though Nona knows nothing of voice-production, and very little about social economy, she is by no means a sentimental idiot. On the contrary, she is a noble-minded, and particularly intelligent creature, who has never had any standard by which to measure herself except that of the limited society of well-meaning people who are all very fond of her.

To this girl in her undeveloped possibilities, comes Roger Frith, the scientific son of a dead Colonel who had left his affairs in embarrassment. Roger has really made a fortune in his own line of work—engineering. But he says nothing of this when he reappears upon his own property, determined to work the abandoned brick-fields and make them pay.

From the first, Nona and he come into collision. The cool, clever man, knowing his own mind and his own powers perfectly, is more than a match for Nona, with her undigested notions and her inbred sentimentality. But Nona fights for her own opinions, and in the course of her arguments with Frith, soon finds out what she really thinks, and what she can really do.

The friction, produced by the contact of the two natures, naturally emits sparks; and these are followed by a figurative conflagration of both the hot spirits. All this part of the story is really excellent. Perhaps the very best chapter is that in which Nona, hearing of the threatened night attack of the men on strike, and believing the overseer to be watching the kiln fires alone, runs out alone and in the night to warn him; and finds that Frith, whom she had foolishly imagined to be away in London, is, as a matter of fact, where she might have expected to find him, at his post, cool, collected, and wholly equal to the occasion as far as his workmen are concerned, though by no means ready to face the situation created by the appearance of the impulsive, generous girl upon the scene of conflict.

The fact that Frith is lame, and that in the course of the contest Nona learns that this man who will not flatter her, who has had the sturdy independence to own that he does not like her kinking, and disapproves of her methods of poor relief, owes his life-long lameness to his having saved her from death as a baby—naturally tends to complicate the young lady's

emotions still further. Her own feelings remain uncertain, even to herself until, in a moment of sudden danger and stress at the end of the book, she knows her own mind once for all, and the Contest is over.

We hope that this able story will win for Miss Haverfield the recognition she deserves. G.M.R.

### What to Read.

- "A Much-abused Letter." By George Tyrrell.  
 "The Story of an Eskimo Dog." By Marshall Saunders.  
 "A Little Brown Mouse." By Madame Albanesi.  
 "Rezanov: a Novel." By Gertrude Atherton.

### Coming Events.

*November 9th.*—Meeting of the Conference and Exhibition Sub-Committee of the Provisional Committee of the National Council of Nurses, 431 Oxford Street, 4 p.m.

*November 9th.*—Opening Lecture on Public Health and Hygiene of a course to be given by Dr. Newman, D.P.H., to the League of St. Bartholomew's Hospital Nurses, at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, 5.45 p.m. These Lectures will be held weekly on Fridays until December 14th. The Course will be concluded after Christmas.

*November 13th.*—In aid of the Hospital for Women, Soho Square, a Sale of Men, Women, and Children's Clothing, suitable for guilds, etc., and many other useful articles, will be held at 20, Portland Place, W., the residence of Sir Marcus and Lady Samuel. Entrance, 1s. Open from 2 o'clock to 6.30. Tea and coffee.

*November 13th.*—Lady Knightley of Fawsley presides at the annual general meeting of the Ladies' Guild, St. Thomas's Hospital, 3.30.

*November 19th.*—Princess Louise Duchess of Argyll opens the new wing of the Central London Throat and Ear Hospital, Gray's Inn Road.

*November 22nd, 23rd, and 24th.*—Provisional Committee National Council of Nurses of Great Britain and Ireland Conference Practically Illustrated on the Nursing of Tuberculosis, Maternity, and Mental Nursing: St. George's Hall, Mount Street, London, W. 11.0 a.m. to 10.30 p.m. Admission free.

*November 28th.*—His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught will preside at the festival dinner of the Royal Free Hospital at the Hotel Cecil.

### A Word for the Week.

"Be human" is a good bit of advice for a human being. For not all human beings are human, any more than all men are manly, or all orators oratorical, or all politicians politic. Which means that we are all liable to drop below the level of our possibilities. Well, what is it to be human? Simply this, to feel and purpose and act as a human being ought. That appeals to one's ideal of character and accomplishment. It inspires one to fill the world full of the finest and largest meanings.

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