

Book of the Week.

THE PULSE OF LIFE*

It is not every man who has the good fortune to be refused by the woman he seeks to marry for her money. Francis Domville has a lucky escape, moreover he realises the fact even while his vanity smarts at the slight put upon him. "You never really cared," writes the lady in question, and in truth he never had. With this little episode which the average reader cannot but feel to be rather an unworthy and undignified one, we are introduced to Domville, and it rather prejudices one's mind against him. As a matter of fact, it is quite out of keeping with the man's character as afterwards portrayed, for he is a very charming fellow, and so proud that when the happiness of his life is at stake he risks losing it rather than humble himself to circumstances that he would have considered intolerable. His love-story with the mysterious Countess Sabine Reiffersberg, as she called herself, is quite a little idyll, carried out in an exceedingly pretty setting; one has real sympathy with it.

But Domville's is not the only love-story in the book. The "pulse of life" throbs in more hearts than one, and not always so satisfactorily. There is the passion of Paul Feyghine for Joaquina Nuñez, to whom he is pathetically faithful. The celebrated Spanish dancer is of the butterfly type, but Paul's devotion is solid and unwavering. It is the secret of his broken career, and the root of the eccentricities that bewilder his acquaintance.

There must have been something peculiarly fascinating about these two men, who, by the way, are cousins. They each of them are the object of the deepest and most selfless love to women who would have made them admirable wives, but whose affection is not reciprocated in kind. The character of Anne Leycester is particularly beautiful: few women would have done for the men they loved what she did for Paul Feyghine. One cannot but feel that he was a little unusual in his demands.

There are a great many characters in the book, and perhaps too many conflicting interests. Of the two central themes it is difficult to decide which is to have predominance. Domville's romance is the most satisfactory. There are also some minor happenings in the story which seemingly have nothing to do with either of the main ideas, and the effect is a trifle disjointed. There are episodes which seem rather unconvincing.

For the writing of the book there is very much to be said: but then it is to be said of every book that Mrs. Belloc Lowndes gives us. She has a most excellent command of language, it is well-chosen, there is never anything clumsy about her work: the style is finished and polished. A novel by her must always be pleasant reading.

E. L. H.

* By Mrs. Belloc Lowndes. (Heinemann.)

THESE SAD YEWS.

These sad yews!
Graves are sad enough without them:
Why do people plant about them
These sad yews?

Where the names of high and humble
Mossy-toothed oblivions crumble,
Year by year they harvest slowly
More and more of melancholy
These sad yews.

Heedless how the year may brighten,
Lilacs bloom, or alders whiten—
These sad yews
From the stones among the daisies
Con by rote the chilliest phrases,
Wag their heads, and keep repeating
"Man is mortal, life is fleeting"—
These sad yews!

W. W. from *Glasgow Herald*.

COMING EVENTS.

March 16th.—Presentation of the Freedom of the City of London to Miss Florence Nightingale.

March 16th.—Miller Memorial Hospital, Greenwich. Lectures to Nurses. "The Tissues of the Body." By Mr. McMullen. 8 p.m.

March 17.—Annual Meeting of Medical Aid Society (to provide medical and surgical advice to poor ladies), at 24, Park Lane, by kind permission of Lord and Lady Brassey, 3 p.m.

March 17th.—Royal Ear Hospital, Dean Street, Soho. Lecture to Nurses on "The After Treatment of Operations on the Ear," by Mr. Macleod Yearsley, F.R.C.S., 4.30 p.m.

March 17th.—Infants' Hospital, Vincent Square, S.W. Lecture by Dr. T. N. Kelynack. "Immature Infants." 5 p.m.

March 18th.—Annual Court of Governors of the Mount Vernon Hospital for Consumption and Diseases of the Chest, the Most Hon. the Marquis of Zetland, K.T., presiding. 7, Fitzroy Square, 4 p.m.

March 18th.—Amateur Performance of "Lady Huntworth's Experiment," in aid of the Children's Sanatorium at Holt, Norfolk, Royal Albert Hall Theatre, 8.30.

March 19th.—Annual Meeting, Chelsea Hospital for Women, the President, the Lord Glenesk, in the chair.

March 19th.—Meeting of Women at the Royal Albert Hall, convened by the National Women's Social and Political Union, 8 p.m.

March 19th.—Monthly Meeting, Central Midwives' Board, Caxton House, S.W., 2.45 p.m.

March 25th.—Post Graduate Lectures. Gynaecology II., "Anomalies of Menstruation, with special reference to early symptoms of Cancer of the Uterus." Royal Infirmary, Edinburgh, 5 p.m. Nurses cordially invited.

A WORD FOR THE WEEK.

The Bishop of London said "they had got so to alter public opinion that what was condemned in the woman was no longer condoned in the man."

At a meeting convened for the Promotion of Public Morals.

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