

lise all his heart, time and attention; she is entirely devoid of maternal feeling, and on the whole dislikes and is jealous of her child Eyolf, who has been crippled in his infancy by the neglect of his parents. Rita is overmastered by jealousy, first of Allmers' book on ethics, second of his sister, and thirdly of his child; and when her husband returns to her after a sojourn among the hills, and announces to her that from henceforth he intends to be a true father to Eyolf, to make a man of him and devote his life to him, she becomes hysterical, and in a wild outburst wishes the boy had never been born. In the midst of her whirling words a noise is heard, the boy is drowned in the fjord. He has been lured to his death by the rat-wife, who comes on in the earlier part of the act; she is an allegorical sort of personage who lures rats into the sea; they follow her "just because they do not want to" to find "a long, sweet sleep." Eyolf fascinated, follows her, and perishes like one of her rats. The ending of the first act is haunting, and the sentence which conveys the tragic news of the child's death to Rita rings with a mystic pathos—"The crutch is floating! The crutch is floating!"

Retribution comes upon his heartless mother, who, when he is taken from her, mourns for his loss. But, Eyolf dead even more than Eyolf living, comes between his parents, and at first it seems as if this play, like others written by the terrible Norwegian, must end with tragedy or a hopeless and pessimistic question; for Allmers discovers that Asta is not his sister, and he yearns for her love and companionship; but for once Ibsen's fatalism fails him, and when Asta discovers that she can no longer look upon her hero as a brother, she elects to disappear from his life, and endeavour to content herself with the love of Engineer Borgheim. The third act is full of subtleties, which, perhaps, only Ibsen would be capable or courageous enough to set before us, but it is unsatisfactory; Rita becomes a new woman, but her change is unconvincing and illogical. This woman egoist, who is incapable of an unselfish thought or action, suddenly turns charitable, and she who scorned the love of her own offspring, determines "to take to her heart" all the poor wretched children of the fjord village. Allmers, after some desultory conversation, promises to help her in her philanthropic undertakings, and they agree that they are to expect no happiness in their work, but they are to look upward to the "peaks and the great silences."

This then is the unsatisfactory conclusion of Ibsen's last new problem play.

I understand that Londoners will be able to judge of its stage capabilities before long, as Miss Robins (whose fascinating and powerful representation of Hedda Gabler is fresh in the memory of many people) intends after Easter to produce it at one of the theatres of our modern Babylon.

A. M. G.

### Reviews.

"THE Englishwoman's Year-book," for 1895, was somewhat late in making its appearance, as owing to the illness of Miss Hubbard, the editor, her work had to be put into other hands. But Miss March Phillipps and Miss Maskell are certainly on the whole to be congratulated upon their preparation for the press. There is

a capital preface from the pen of the former lady, which is both a review of Women's Work in 1894, and a forecast of the future. It is clear, concise, and a model in *style* of what such a preface should be. But while saying so much, it is impossible for one thoroughly acquainted with the nursing world not to regret this expression: "In the Nursing World no prominent event has occurred in 1894, a fact in which those interested see cause for thankfulness, as time is given for consolidation as well as progress." No mention whatever is made of the Matrons' Council, which from every point of view, public as well as professional, is an important movement, as consolidating the matured experience and opinions of trained women at the head of their calling. But an even worse error was made in 1894, when it was stated that no important event in the Nursing World had occurred in 1893. Yet in 1893 the Royal British Nurses' Association obtained its Royal Charter, which no society of women ever before succeeded in getting. The occasion indeed was historic. We are not prepared to say whether similar errors are made in other parts of the volume; let us hope not, for one would rather not think that a work so eminently comprehensive in its aim is marred by many such errors of omission.

### Inventions, Preparations, &c.

#### AN ENEMA RACK.



THIS is a most useful and ingenious contrivance, because as every nurse knows, rubber enema syringes suffer far more from being kept folded up in their boxes than from the effects of ordinary use. The rack hangs against the wall, and the catch at the top holds the upper rubber, while a small bottle suspended at the end of the rack holds in its open mouth the rubber end of the syringe. By this means, the rubber is kept always extended, and any fluid dripping from the nozzle is caught in the bottle. The racks fold up and so are most portable. The instrument only costs ninepence, and should last for ever, while in the mere saving of syringes its cost would probably be repaid many times over, each year. We can therefore cordially recommend the invention to the notice of our readers, and would advise them to try it for themselves. The instrument can be obtained from Messrs. Reynolds and Branson, 13, Briggate, Leeds.

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