

A Book of the Week.

"THE DEMAGOGUE AND LADY PHAYRE."*

DANIEL GODDARD the Demagogue, his wife Lizzie, and Lady Phayre, are the three characters about whom this volume of the Pioneer Series is written. The story is not thrilling, and there are no adventures and no romance within its somewhat prosaic pages, but the three individuals named above are so intensely, vividly human that the book cannot fail to interest any reader.

To begin with, Daniel Goddard "was young, eight-and-twenty, a cabinet-maker by trade, self-taught, and consequently self-opinionated." He was a power and an authority in the Trades Union of which he was a most prominent member. Members of Parliament sought his acquaintance and asked his advice, and if it were not for his engagement to the fluffy-haired pink-complexioned Lizzie, he might rapidly have risen in the social scale. But Daniel is honest, and will not repudiate his betrothed, even though he is a politician, and a fairly rich man (for he unexpectedly inherits a nice little property from an uncle).

Alas! in his case virtue and constancy did not have their due reward. I know few more sombre pictures in modern realistic fiction than the description of the home of the unfortunate Demagogue. He rises every year to a higher intellectual level, but in due proportion to his elevation, his wife sinks lower and lower in the scale of humanity—for realising that Daniel has no real love and sympathy for her, she abandons herself to drink, and renders her house a veritable pandemonium for her miserable husband.

Lady Phayre comes into the Demagogue's life like a brilliant comet. She is to him a being from another sphere of existence. At first Daniel did not wish to enter her world, and he refuses robustly her most tempting invitations. Needless to say his conduct piques the lady, and she becomes more and more assiduous in her kindness to this clever, humbly-born politician, with the result, that dazzled by her manners and her feminine charms, he gladly avails himself of every opportunity of meeting her, and thus there came about a condition of affairs which the author aptly entitles "A Demagogue's Idyll."

"Talk on Social subjects had ever been with him a deeply serious matter. Lady Phayre had brought into it an unknown lightness, a sparkle, a mental keenness, against which his own intellect sharpened itself, and at the same time a bewildering waywardness that never allowed him to forget that she was a woman. In short Lady Phayre was a revelation. He walked along with a buoyant step like a man who has made a new discovery that promises to change the old order of things."

Their friendship became an intense interest, and excitement in both their lives, and they go down and work together to hearten the working men in an important strike at Ecclesby. Goddard leaves the town feeling sure that "he had lost his Waterloo." But after he had gone things suddenly changed their aspect, and an M.P. friend came and called on Lady Phayre and told her of the Demagogue's unexpected success. Then a wild fancy seized her, an irrepressible desire.

* "The Demagogue and Lady Phayre," by William Locke. Pioneer Series. 2s. 6d. (Heinemann, 1896.)

"Women who are in the habit of throwing their caps over windmills find it as monotonous as anything else after a time; but for one who has never done it before, the act is accompanied with a rare exhilaration."

So she determined to drive to the politician's house, and to take herself the message of victory to the man she loved.

A terrible scene follows, for the lady is received at the door of the Demagogue's abode by a woman with soddened features, dull eyes, untidy hair, and dressed in a dirty flannel dressing-gown—and the disgust and revolt of Lady Phayre's soul "could find its only expression in an inarticulate cry." This scene from beginning to end is inexpressibly pathetic, and every reader must feel the deepest consideration for the wretched Demagogue, as he witnessed this meeting between his Egeria and his drunken and slatternly wife.

The ending of the story is very subtle, and I will not spoil the interest of any reader by revealing it.

A. M. G.

Bookland.

WHAT TO READ.

"Recollections of Paris," by Captain the Hon. D. A. Bingham, Author of "Napoleon's Last Despatches" and "The Bastille."

"Poems." By Emily Hickey. (London: Elkin Mathews.)

"Classes and Masses; or, Wealth, Wages, and Welfare in the United Kingdom"; a Handbook of Social Facts for Political Thinkers and Speakers, by W. H. Mallock.

"Old Goriot," edited by Prof. Saintsbury. Translated by Miss Ellen Marriage.

"A Lady of Quality," by Mrs. Hodgson Burnett. (Frederick Warne & Co.)

"Towards the Eternal Snows," by Edmund Mitchell.

"A Pagan Soul," by Louis Vintras, author of "Lady Folly."

"A Man and a Woman," by Stanley Waterloo. (George Redway.)

A first edition of 20,000 copies of Marie Corelli's new book, "The Mighty Atom," will be ready about March 23rd.

Mr. Fisher Unwin has published a new work by Mr. Joseph Conrad, whose first book, "Almayer's Folly," was so warmly received. Its title will be "The Outcast of the Land," and its action will take place in the Malay Peninsula, which was also the scene of poor Almayer's folly. We are assured that the book will add much to a reputation already high.

Madame Sarah Grand, in the "Humanitarian," declares that marriage is the most sacred institution in the world. While expressing admiration of Mr. Grant Allen's talents, and gratitude for his sympathy with women, she differs emphatically from the author of "The Woman Who Did," epitomising his teaching in the statement, "Mr. Grant Allen wants us to return to the customs of the poultry-yard."

In the April number of *Chapman's Magazine*, a new serial, entitled, "The Herb Moon," by John Oliver Hobbes, will be commenced,

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