

Professor Rudolf Virchow, of Berlin, is a savant of unusually liberal mind, and his reception of a deputation of Russian lady doctors, at Moscow, after the late International Congress, was a most interesting event. The spokeswoman of the deputation thanked the great pathologist for his championship of the cause of the medical education of women. The Professor, in returning thanks, spoke highly of the ability of Russian female students of medicine, and expressed the opinion that the Medical Institute for Women, recently opened at St. Petersburg, had a future of usefulness before it.

The death is announced, at Berlin, of heart disease, of Frau Schepeler-Lette, the head of the Letteverein, an institution for the furtherance of the woman's work movement. Germany can ill spare one of her intellectual women, with the great fight for just laws for women still to be won.

Mdlle. Chauvin, the first French lady to obtain the degree of Doctor of Law, has made formal application for admission to the Paris Bar, with the intention of practising as an advocate. The application has caused a sensation in Paris legal circles.

A Book of the Week.

"THE FASCINATION OF THE KING."*

THE idea of this book is a distinctly original one, and, according to the author's preface, it has some slight foundation in fact. It is the story of the ambition of a young man of our own day, who, finding himself in the position of an adventurer, takes service in some Eastern wars, and arrives in the kingdom of the Médangs—which appears to be somewhere in the region of Singapore,—and takes advantage of internal difficulties to get himself crowned king. He has a mysterious friend in Venice, to whose house he resorts when the fatigues of government make him desirous to rest, and here he makes the acquaintance of a young English nobleman, Lord Instow, and his lovely sister, Lady Olivia. Soon after they become acquainted, a telegram warns his majesty that the French Government, which has hitherto recognized his sovereignty, is making difficulties about the frontier. The last P. and O. steamer has just sailed, and the king asks Lord Instow point-blank to take him back to his kingdom on the yacht.

Here is good material: think what Anthony Hope might have done with it! We might have had another "Prisoner of Zenda!"

It is very disappointing to find that Mr. Boothby does not know what to do with his opportunities. The whole story turns upon the marvellous personal fascination of the king: and for this, we simply have to take the author's word from end to end. He displays no single one of those qualities which would have made him a leader of men, with the one exception of a reckless personal daring which he displays towards the end of the book, and which makes one wish that the Greeks had had one such leader in their recent

campaign,—almost any body of men would be victorious under the spell of such an enthusiasm.

With this exception, he is simply what one would call a poor creature. At the beginning of the book he is told by a specialist that he has barely two years to live, being far gone in consumption; yet neither he nor Mr. Boothby seem to consider this any reason why he should not ask a beautiful English girl to marry him, and bring a child into the world, to inherit pulmonary disease, and his father's exceedingly precarious throne. Think of the position of the widowed queen during her baby's twenty years' minority, among these oriental people, who appear to be only held together by "the fascination of the king!"

Then, in the early chapters of the book, the king tells Lord Instow that he has been so often deceived that he distrusts everyone; yet he gives his confidence to a most transparent traitor, whom Instow has warned him against; and, though assuring Instow that he has the utmost regard for his judgment, he deliberately prefers to take the traitor's advice. He manifests a childish impatience when things go wrong; he is curiously communicative to strangers: altogether, he is, on the whole, a most unsatisfactory hero, in spite of the author's assurance to the contrary.

But Mr. Boothby has so much invention that it is to be hoped he will one day acquire a style too. It is certainly painful to come across sentences like the following:—

"It thrilled me through and through as I had never been made to do before."

The thing that struck me as the most ingenious in the book, is the discovery of the real nature of the king's illness. I speak of course, as one who knows nothing of these things, but, if the strange idea be possible, and such an operation as is described in this book, could really be successful, then Nurses will have a peculiar interest in the climax of the story. To the uninitiated it sounds probable that an encysted bullet in the lung might simulate phthisical symptoms; but whether it could be got at in the manner indicated, is a more doubtful matter. Would not the Röntgen Rays have been indispensable?

G. M. R.

Ideal.

WE are not sundered, for we never met.
We only passed each other in the throng,
We moved together but not long . . . not long . . .
You were indifferent . . . and I may forget
Your profound eyes, your heavy hair, your voice
So clear, yet deep and low with tenderness,
That lingered on my ears like a caress
And roused my heart to make a futile choice.

O! Poet that passed me carelessly in the throng—
O! Soul that clamoured unto God in song!
How should I lose you thus and lack regret?

(From "Opals," by Olive Custance.)

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* "The Fascination of the King," by Guy Boothby. (Ward, Lock and Co.)

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