

quite distinct from that of the former book, so that any reader may read the present story without having read the other, though I would advise anyone who could get hold of "Waynflete" to read that first.

"By-the-way," says in the course of the story, the practical Max Mervyn, "the boy who drove me told me a queer story, ghosts and all that sort of thing. The old lady thought I had better not mention it; *but I suppose you don't go in for psychical rot*, so it won't signify."

But I feel I am safe in recommending a psychical novel to the readers of the *NURSING RECORD*. We working women find ourselves in contact with so many types, such strange phenomena, in our battle through the world, that we are much less apt to be cocksure than were our carefully shielded forbears, and much more ready to admit that there are things in heaven and earth for which our philosophy, though it has found a name, has so far discovered no laws.

The Waynflete ghost, is the apparition of a certain renegade, who saved his own head, after the Monmouth rebellion, by turning King's evidence. He is visible only to his descendants, and is a spirit of evil, to be resisted and fought to the uttermost.

Guy Waynflete, the present possessor of the old place, which has never prospered since the renegade's days, is a "visualizer;" and has had many an experience of his ancestral malediction. In "The Main Chance," the evil is finally overcome of good, but at a tremendous price. Guy's wonderful influence, seconded by the pure courage and loveliness of disposition of the girl whom he is to marry, is able to save even poor Wickham, who passes under an alias, trifles with the affections of the rectory governess, starts a bubble company, and in most ways behaves, as the rector's wife remarks, "like the villain in a play." But Miss Coleridge, by her very skilful dealing with the man's complex character, both in his capacity as a villain, and as a penitent, takes him quite successfully out of the region of melodrama and enables one to believe in him and to sympathize with him.

The character of Florella, the girl who is engaged to Guy, is wonderfully charming and successful. She is a New Woman of the best type, admirable in all the relations of life, as artist, as friend, and as lover. Miss Coleridge has a great deal of perception, and she says many pithy things in the course of her simple story.

"It is not, perhaps, every girl who can be the friend of her lover's friend; but Florella was capable of it, perhaps because she was the friend of her lover himself."

"In truth, there is nothing that clever and 'viewy' young women like better than the discussion of insoluble problems; and, allowing for the fact that all questions have false or temporary bottoms on many levels, there are few things more advantageous to them."

"Florella made him notice all she saw, lights and shadows, lines and curves. She could find joy in a cart under an archway, in every alternation of shade and shine."

\* "The Main Chance." By Christabel Coleridge. Hurst & Blackett.

Then, with regard to Wickham's behaviour to Katie, the poor little empty-headed girl, who is one of the best studies in the book.

"Trifling with the affections of the vicarage governess would not stand to his credit in his new neighbourhood. But, like Katie herself, he wanted to get all the pleasure he could out of a life which he regarded as dull and monotonous. Katie, like others, must take her chance and take care of herself. She was not the first for him, and she was so ready that he hardly believed that he was indeed the first for her. He was a man likely to misunderstand her, and she, poor thing, was a girl easy to be misunderstood."

And again, when Florella, Guy, and Wickham are discussing hypnotic experiments

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)