

who must follow on. Ere the end of this year we hope to see some of our distinguished women-painters receive those titles, diplomas, and "decorations" that are the outward and visible signs of appreciation.

EMILY CRAWFORD.

A Book of the Week.

A DUET.*

I opened this book with the greatest eagerness, as soon as I heard that the creator of Sherlock Holmes had for the nonce forsaken sensation, and was trusting in his power of character drawing to make himself interesting. "The Tragedy of the Korosko" had given me a very high idea of the writer's powers in this line; but I must reluctantly confess that the present book is a distinct disappointment.

The idea is that of a very ordinary middle-class young couple married on a small—not to say a very small—income, with the little unexpected pains and pleasures that crop up for them in married life, the ups and downs, the joys and sorrows, until the duet becomes a trio.

It is an excellent idea; but when one thinks of Tolstoi, and the description of Konstantin Levin's first impression of married life in "Anna Karenina," one heaves a sigh. It is perhaps not quite fair to class Dr. Doyle with Tolstoi; and there is a great deal of very amusing, and some very charming writing in his book. The distinction of style which made "The Tragedy of the Korosko" great is, however, almost wholly lacking.

The author falls into the very common mistake of making both the husband and the wife typical and not individual. The young husband of good abilities, who cultivates the charmingly undeveloped intelligence of his young wife, is surely an out-of-date creation. When I reflect upon the girls I know, their good education—quite as thorough as a man's—their interest in their studies—so much greater than the average man's—their fine physique, their wide range of interests—I feel a little bit as if "Maude" failed to convince me. The Chapter on the "Browning Society" is extremely funny. I laughed enormously over it; it would make excellent sport at a Penny Reading; but I do not consider it in the least true to life. I contend that the average well-educated girl of the day would be far more likely to read and to appreciate Browning than would her husband. Then also the vulgar superstition that every young man has been unchaste before his marriage, is egregiously untrue, and may do great harm. Foolish young fellows, quite without vicious tendencies, reading such nonsense, may be inclined to think that an apprenticeship in vice is necessary for a man, unless he is a muff; the height of vulgarity and barbarism.

Perhaps the best chapter is the one in which the duet becomes a trio; but the first home-coming of the young people is also very good; and the one transaction on the Stock Exchange, in which they indulge, is extremely funny, though that also pre-supposes a depth of simplicity which one would imagine to be rare among city clerks.

* By Dr. Conan Doyle. Grant Richards.

The list of rules for the guidance of the "Two-oared boat," which Frank draws up soon after marriage, is very amusing. So is the chapter in which Maude relates the history of her early love.

It all makes one wish that the author had taken his theme more seriously, though not to the exclusion of all brightness; and that he had given us the marriage of two grown-up people, not a boy and girl: for the trials that beset Frank and Maude are, truth to tell, not exactly the trials that the up-to-date newly married pair will encounter. To begin with, rich parents do not generally allow their only daughter to marry a man with four hundred a year, and no private means, and dole out to her the princely sum of fifty pounds a year. Her clothes must have cost that, when she lived at home, let alone her keep. But it is perhaps not a very gross exaggeration of the attitude of the ordinary British father, who thinks he has merely to hand over his daughter to any man who volunteers to support her, and then wash his hands of her. It is this King Cophetua rôle of the husband which causes the grovelling attitude of so many British wives.

G. M. R.

WHAT TO READ.

- "The Life of William Ewart Gladstone." Edited by Sir Wemyss Reid.
- "Matthew Arnold." By Professor Saintsbury.
- "The Heart of Asia." By F. H. Skrine and E. D. Ross.
- "Impressions of South Africa." By the Right Hon. James Bryce, M.P.
- "Richard Carvel." By Winston Churchill.
- "The Game and the Candle." By Rhoda Broughton.
- "Adam and Eve." By Mrs. Parr.
- "A Lass of Lennox." By James Strang.

Coming Events.

June 26th.—Opening International Congress of Women, Church House, the Countess of Aberdeen, President, presiding, 2.30 p.m.

June 27th.—The Duke and Duchess of York will open the New Building of the Royal London Ophthalmic Hospital in City Road, at 3.30 p.m.

The Duchess of Sutherland opens a Sale of Inmates' Work at the Royal Hospital for Incurables, Putney, 2.30 p.m.

International Council of Women—Discussion on International Arbitration, Queen's Hall, 8.0 p.m.

June 28th.—Mrs. Beer entertains the Journalists of the Women's International Congress at 7, Chesterfield Gardens, Curzon Street, 5 to 7 p.m. Music.

June 29th.—The Duchess of York opens a Garden Fête at Kidbrooke Lodge, Blackheath, in aid of the Countess of Dufferin's Fund for Medical Relief to the Women of India, 3.30 p.m.

National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies' Meeting, Queen's Hall, 8 p.m.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)