

Baroness Von Suttner, the well-known peace advocate, in a letter to Mr. Felix Moscheles, compares the conduct of British Imperialists in Trafalgar Square with that of the Jews at Calvary.

The campaign against Mormonism, inaugurated by the Female Guardian Society, under the presidency of Miss Helen Gould, and which has for its immediate object the unseating of Congressman Brigham Roberts, of Utah, who recently flaunted three of his six wives in the face of Washington society, was opened with a great flourish of trumpets in New York. Miss Gould addressed a large gathering in Twenty-ninth Street Assembly Hall in that city, and excited intense enthusiasm by her stirring denunciation of Mr. Roberts's Mormonism. Mr. Roberts, on his part, publishes a statement to the effect that since the attacks upon him first began six months ago, he has received dozens of proposals for polygamous union from well-connected ladies in the Eastern States.

"COMPARATIVE CHARITY."

An instructive list of bequests has lately been published in *The Times*, and seems to have attracted some attention.

By the published account we find that during the past eight years a hundred and fifty women have exercised testamentary powers over ten millions and a half (of money) as personalty, and out of this sum have bequeathed no less sum than £2,696,000 for religious and charitable purposes; or more than 25 per cent., while during the same period three hundred and ten men, who left behind them £65,489,000 in cash, distributed only £7,423,000 in charities, or 11¼ per cent. of the total sum.

These are hard facts, out of which a contemporary has essayed to draw conclusions of an entirely opposing character by a really curious inversion of reasoning and that naive demonstration of ignorance of "motive" that forms the chief charm of masculine criticism of women's action.

The article referred to, ends with recommending women (*women*, mind you) to further endow the two Universities—those Universities chiefly founded by women, which have lately denied them admittance to their degrees, with every circumstance of insult and contumely that an undergrad.'s fancy could prompt!

The moral of all this is that women should be more judicious in the distribution of their noble gifts, and be especially careful with regard to the balance of education. They should throw all their weight into the long-neglected scale of the girl's side, and not add to the heaped-up and overflowing gratuities to men and boys. It will take all their efforts to restore the lost equilibrium.

EMILY CRAWFORD.

A Book of the Week.

THE PATH OF A STAR.*

THIS book is a surprise, and not altogether a welcome one. Mrs. Cotes we know, and her style we know, and fully appreciate; but Mrs. Cotes with a

layer of Mr. Henry James super-imposed—the result of this curious amalgam is a thing to be reckoned with, and is somewhat bewildering in its effects.

"A Social Departure" and Vernon's Aunt," and all their delightful successors, left upon the mind a keen impression of acquaintance with, and regard for, the personages concerned in the tale. But, full of the new influence, in this present book Mrs. Cotes has so explained her characters, that she has explained them all away. We know so much about them that we cannot know themselves. We are never for a moment allowed to imagine for ourselves the effect upon anybody, or what anybody else says or does; the direction of the eye, the movement of the hand, the tone of the voice, are all catalogued; with the result that at the end of the book, we feel miles away, hopelessly out of touch with everybody, except perhaps, Laura Filbert, the Salvation Army girl, whom, for some reason, the author leaves us more free to assimilate than the rest.

There are two couples in the book, culled from the less important stratum of Calcutta society. Alicia Livingstone is the sister of an army doctor; Hilda Howe is an actress; Duff Lindsay is on the Calcutta Stock Exchange; and Stephen Arnold is a member of an Anglican Brotherhood.

These four people indulge in wonderful, subtle interchanges of suggestion—one cannot call it thought. Their voices "caress their ideas," whatever that may mean; they say to each other—

"Well you are of a hardihood"—

A form of expression of which I understood that Mr. James had the copyright. It is said once of Duff Lindsay—

"In his rejoicing eye-beam, one saw almost a midwire to one's idea."

A saying which requires some translation!

Of course the book is full of merit. That goes without saying; Mrs. Cotes could not be inept, though unfortunately she has allowed herself to be artificial. The best part—far the best—is the infatuation of Duff Lindsay for the Salvation Army girl. The halo that surrounds her as she slips through the streets in her Hindu garb, with her bare feet—the intense refinement of her when contrasted with her unspeakably impossible colleagues; and then—how the glamour fades away when he sees her for the first time dressed like the other women he knows, and showing her want of breeding at a glance! The gradual disillusioning of the letters she writes home from England! The scene on page 209, in which Duff reads to Alicia, who loves him, and whom he really loves, though he does not know it, the first letter he receives from Laura describing her voyage to England, with its little vulgarities and trivialities and slightly wrong use of harmless words—this is all in Mrs. Cotes very best manner, and one quite enjoys it.

But when Hilda Howe, actress to the core, because she loves Stephen Arnold, masquerades as a probationer in a Sisterhood, without having, so far as one is allowed to know, one gleam of sincerity underlying her proceedings, one can only feel disgust.

It is much to be hoped that, in her next book, Mrs. Cotes will forget that she ever read a line of Mr. James, and allow her people to rise and be seated without taking half a page to do it in.

G. M. R.

* By Mrs. Everard Cotes. Methuen.

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