

A Book of the Week.

"THE MINX."*

Mrs. Mannington Caffyn has come a long way both in style and in refinement of thought, since she wrote "A Yellow Aster."

Her new story contains much that one can warmly praise. The idea is a novel one, the pity of it is, that her narration is so jerky, and she seems so unable to work things out to their legitimate climax. There is one small circumstance which is most annoying to the reader, and regarding which one would like to plead with the author to make a change in future editions. She calls her two heroes and her heroine by this trying trio of names, Jock, James, and Joyce. Jock, reminding one irresistibly of a turkey cock, is enough to deprive the most excellent of young men of some of the interest which he ought to excite; but the main point is the curious resemblance between the three names, which makes it often difficult to distinguish between them.

Joyce Austiss is the only daughter of a lady of country family, who has married a hard-worked clergyman in the Midlands, and succumbed to the general dreariness of the life she is called upon to lead. The cleric in question is a prey to a liver which occupies all his leisure hours. His daughter, Joyce, brought up in such an atmosphere, seeing only the dreary side of life's actualities, and unstained by any spirituality in her father's home character, becomes a Radical, a Socialist, and an Agnostic. Like most of her sort, she takes herself with frightful seriousness. "Her sense of humour," we are told, "would have gone into a nutshell." Thus, when she goes to stay with Lady Rawson, her aunt, and is suddenly plunged into a set of good-humoured, leisured people, who go to balls, hunt foxes, and leave their tenantry without modern improvements, she considers herself to have a mission to exhort them, with the idea of reforming their low tastes, and making them think. There is a well-drawn scene in which she, accidentally, when on her bicycle, happens on a fox-hunt, and is "in at the death,"—takes the opportunity to lift up her testimony in the face of the entire field. All the gentlemen are so sorry for the eager, ignorant thing, holding forth so warmly on a point she does not understand, and they all know her protest springs out of an oppressive sense of duty, and not from any desire to assert herself. But her great beauty is probably a great factor in their forbearance.

Presently she encounters the brilliant young radical millionaire, whom once she had heard to make a speech at a socialist meeting—a speech which set the room aflame. It is difficult for her to adjust her universe, when she sees him staying with these irresponsible land-owners, doing as they do, and inclined to be vexed when his inflammatory utterances are referred to.

The balancings of the girl's mind between her two lovers, both of them too perfect to be quite natural forms the plot of the book.

There is one character, that of Jock's step-mother, which narrowly escapes being a great achievement. But a certain hysterical sort of introspectiveness just mars all this writer's efforts. She cannot keep herself out of her people: the way in which James Coates's

*By Iota. Hutchinson.

old mother analyses her own feelings is quite ridiculous and Elinor Thorpe is only a prig dressed out in other clothing. But the book is distinctly one to read, and is full of nice bits, some of the scenery touches being especially happy. G. M. R.

Faith.

The master must to a distant land,
With a foreign foe to fight;
And the master's wife was glad of it,
But she hid her false delight,
And came to him with a tearful face,
And begged of him to stay;
But the master's hound was sorry,
And it went and it hid away.

The master's ship, from the harbour's mouth,
Beat out to the stormy sea;
And his wife stayed late at my lady's ball,
Rejoicing to be free.

They said she shone like a jewel there,
And she heard it with delight;
But she could not sleep for the master's hound,
For it howled through the livelong night.

The master died—he was shot to death
In that land beyond the sea—
And they brought his body home, to lie
In a grave by the cypress tree;
And the master's widow hid her face
And made believe she cried;
But the master's hound stayed by his grave
Till it starved to death—and died.

—From *The Sun*. BERTRAND SHADWELL.

WHAT TO READ.

- "Sunbeams Through the War-Cloud: Short Poems on Special Incidents in South Africa." By F. J. Hamilton, D.D.
- "Drift." Verses. By Horatio F. Brown.
- "John Ruskin." By Mrs. Meynell.
- "A Lady of the Regency." By Mrs. Stepney Rawson.
- "Side Lights on the Reign of Terror; being the Memoirs of Mademoiselle des Echerolles, translated from the French by Marie Clothilde Balfour."
- "Voices in the Night." By Flora Annie Steel.
- "Little Bob." By "Gyp."
- "The Gentleman from Indiana." By Booth Tarkington.
- "Woman and Artist." By Max O'Rell.

Coming Events.

June 5th to 8th.—The Medical, Surgical, and Hygienic Exhibition, Queen's Hall, Langham Place, W. Concerts 3.30 to 6, and 7.30 to 10 p.m. Nurses in uniform admitted free.

June 30th.—Prince and Princess of Wales open the new Jenny Lind Infirmary for Sick Children at Norwich.

July 5th.—Meeting of the Provisional Committee of the International Council of Nurses at the Matron's House, St. Bartholomew's Hospital, 11 a.m. Members entertained to luncheon by Miss Isla Stewart, 1 p.m.

July 5th and 6th.—Matrons' Council Conference, Medical Societies' Rooms, Chandos Street, Cavendish Square, 3 to 6 p.m.

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