

A Book of the Week.

THE PRISON-HOUSE.*

We always welcome with special pleasure a new recruit to the ranks of women novelists. When such a firm as Blackwood publishes a book by an unknown writer, there is sure to be some good reason for their so doing.

The lady who has selected the name of Jane Jones has no doubt a future before her.

Her romance proceeds upon somewhat well-worn lines, but her style of treatment is so new and fresh that one forgets that the ingredients which went to the mixing of so well-tasting a dish have been used many a time before.

Harold Clay comes into a fortune of eight thousand a year, and being an idler by disposition, at once proceeds to find some mischief for his idle hands to do.

Eve Hepburn, beautiful and fond of pleasure and society, finds herself obliged, through the ruin of her father, an Irish landlord, to become a governess, being singularly ill-suited to that particular rôle in life.

These two meet, like "ships that pass in the night," and part again, but the meeting has left an indelible impression. Then Harold, at the invitation of a priest named Roger Horton, a very distant relation of his own, to whom, if wills were just, should have gone the money that was bequeathed to Harold, goes down to a sleepy Yorkshire town, and is introduced to the lovely Puritan, Mary Upton. She produces on him, that extraordinary impression which a perfectly cold and austere beauty always does seem to produce upon a man whose own life has been by no means too strait-laced. He marries her; she is dazzled by his good looks and his money, but does not love him; what heart she has having been given to Roger Horton.

This incongruous couple set up house in London. The consequences are what might have been expected, and at the critical moment in Harold's life, he meets Eve again.

But it is the way in which the consequences are brought about and worked out which strongly shows the ability of the writer.

Here is one of her quick touches of description:—

"A well-used smile, which was turned on like an electric light and went out with equal rapidity—a smile without a twilight, like the light of a southern clime."

Here a dash of cynicism:—

"The average man finds it more interesting to snatch a brand from the burning and convert it himself than to take to himself a ready-made piece of perfection, who may even consider herself leader in the piety tandem."

On page 72 will be found the account of Mary's demeanour when her husband, still in love and hoping all things, brings her home to his London house. It is extremely good; and on page 192, the account of how the two drifted apart, and a most able sketch of Mary's attitude towards her lax spouse, and its inevitable consequences.

But the gem of the book is the account of Eve's feelings when first she realises the nature of her sin, through looking into the pure eyes of her little child.

* By Jane Jones. Blackwood and Sons.

The end of the book is one with which many readers will find themselves out of sympathy; but the talent of the writing as a whole is unmistakeable.

G. M. R.

The Hour-Glass.

BY PRISCILLA LEONARD.

Eternal things can stretch or shorten Time
At their imperial will: from chime to chime
Measures the limit of an hour, yet still
The anguish of a soul can overfill
A century's cup as the slow seconds move,
Or, throned within the heart, a rapturous love
With passionate and all-compelling power
Can, by a touch, make of the self-same hour
A single yearning moment, swift to pass.
Ah, Time! how impotent thy scythe and glass,—
Plaything thou art, though tyrant thou wouldst be,
For man's eternal soul makes sport of thee!

From American Outlook.

WHAT TO READ.

- "Zoroaster; Philosopher, Teacher, Hermit. A Day at the Mountain Cave. A Fragment in Rhyme." by Aristo.
- "Memoirs of the Prince of Joinville."
- "A Marriage in China." By Mrs. Archibald Little.
- "Chinatown Stories." By C. B. Fernald.
- "Chun Ti-Kung." By Claude A. Rees.
- "The Master Christian." By Marie Corelli.
- "The Monk and the Dancer." By Arthur Cosslett Smith.
- "The Autobiography of a Charwoman." By Annie Wakeman.
- "History of Robert Orange, M.P." By John Oliver Hobbs.
- "The Increasing Purpose." By James Lane Allen.
- "Bowery Tales: George's Mother. Maggie." By Stephen Crane.
- "Studies in Love." By Maude Egerton King.

Coming Events.

July 23rd.—The Duke and Duchess of York lay the foundation stone of the new Free Library at Wolverhampton and open the new infirmary of the Wolverhampton Orphanage.

July 24th.—Lord Aberdeen presides at the prize distribution at the British Orphan Asylum, Slough.

July 25th.—Royal College of Surgeons' Centenary Festival: Conversazione at the college, 9-12.

July 26th.—The Prince of Wales attends the Centenary Dinner of the Royal College of Surgeons, Lincoln's Inn Hall, 8.

July 27th.—Royal College of Surgeons' Centenary Festival: Conversazione at the Mansion House, 9-11.

July 28th.—Princess Louise, Duchess of Argyll, unveils the statue of Sir Sydney Waterlow in Waterlow Park, Highgate.

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