

The days of feudal patronage are gone, and the exploiting of London by the Chairmen and Directors of Monopolist Companies, dealing at extortionate rates in the first necessities of life, must be put down with a firm hand; the County Council of London must see that the people shall have a decent if simple environment, and thus decrease the mainspring of human misery and human crime—overcrowding, sweating dens, and semi-starvation—conditions of existence unfit for an animal, much less a man,

No little of the success of the Progressive victory is due to the women of London who threw themselves into the contest with right good will, even "moribund Marylebone" at least in its East Division has at last arisen and brought in two Independents at the head of the poll, and we refer to this election, because a month ago such a triumph for progress was laughed to scorn. "Why fight a foregone conclusion? Marylebone is Tory to the backbone. Mr. Boulnois, (the bitter anti-woman-suffragist), has long been dictator of the parish in matters political and municipal." This expression of opinion was just the spark required to fire the energies of the women suffragists in the parish, and away they went at full tilt. Mrs. John Mac Nicol took matters in hand, meetings were held at the houses of Mrs. Bedford Fenwick and Dr. May Dickinson Berry, the constituency mapped out, canvassing undertaken, and in less than a month this notorious stronghold of monopoly and mediæval muddledom, fell a victim to their bow and spear, a scalp worthy of a prominent place.

This contest teaches another lesson. One candidate, Dr. Fletcher Little won his seat by just One Vote (and we hear that a sick man was carefully conducted to the poll by an obdurate wife). How can any elector after this shuffle out of his responsibility by saying "Oh! one vote don't matter." To vote is a precious privilege and duty. May we women soon know the self-respect of exercising the parliamentary franchise. But first we have got to tackle the *type Boulnois*, and this election proves that it can be done.

A Book of the Week.

QUALITY CORNER.*

This book—the first by this author which has come into my hands—is evidently the work of a woman. One sees the evidence of this on every page. To say which is, as my readers know, by no means to disparage. The book shows signs of real ability, and of an uncommon kind. This is mingled with a good deal of nonsense, some repetition, and various signs of a comparative novice. The authoress makes the initial mistake of calling her book, as a kind of sub-title, "a study of remorse." This at the outset lets us into the secret of the charming doctor's ultimate fate. We know that the modern school of fiction finds no place of repentance for man or woman, and that the Past, without which no book now dares come before a discriminating public, is dogging the footsteps of James Cassilis, only to catch up with him just as one is beginning to grow interested in his fate. This kind of thing, I humbly

* By C. L. Antrobus. (Chatto and Windus.)

submit, is more sport to the novelist than to the reader. The ominous shudderings with which James Cassilis views the Mere, make one quite sure that, by all the canons of fiction, he will ultimately be drowned in it; the love with which Thea inspires him, or rather the fancy,—it is never strong enough to be called love,—encourages one to suppose that he will never marry her. The attraction which he finds in Ringway, the happiness and peace, we know are the sure prelude to storms and woe; and when the rustics, in full dialect, inform each other that all the previous owners of the house he has taken, have come to a bad end, we know his case to be utterly hopeless. . . . The writer is sometimes led away by her love of metaphor into curious sayings; and her diction is by no means always correct. What is a "west transept?"

Also, it is here humbly submitted that the iris has no scent—that is, no scent which will linger on the air. Mr. Basset, one of the dwellers in "Quality Corner," has a fancy to educate mankind by means of perfumes. He has his rooms filled with different flowers on different days, with the view of exciting different emotions. Iris, thus employed would surely be wholly inefficacious!

But there are many fine thoughts, some well, even very well, put, in this book.

Take this for an example, Mark Parfitt and James Cassilis are rivals. Parfitt, standing on a bridge, in the moonlight, sees Cassilis struggling in the water below, and leaves him to drown. Says the author—

"Let no man stigmatize the artist's conduct as monstrous or unnatural. People have become so imbued with the idea of Christian chivalry, that they positively think it is natural for one man to help another in a difficulty. It isn't. The natural impulse is to leave him alone. Parfitt simply did the natural thing. There was no reason why he should inconvenience himself by pulling Cassilis out, and he did not. The traitors, cowards, and dirty mean rascals, male and female, that one meets with, are not the human monsters that one likes to imagine them. Oh, no; they are simply the natural man acting in accordance with the natural dictates of self-preservation, self-advancement, and self-enjoyment."

There is more truth in this than folks nowadays like to concede.

If the matter of this book were as good as the style, and if the author did not make such desperate efforts to write in colour, to bring the very scene before our eyes, when we are capable, or believe we are, of imagining it for ourselves, "Quality Corner" would be a very fine book indeed. G. M. R.

What to Read.

- "Madame: the Life of Henrietta, Daughter of Charles I., Duchess of Orleans." By Julia Cartwright (Mrs. Ady).
- "The Life Romantic, including the Love Letters of the King." By Richard Le Gallienne.
- "A Wayside Weed." By a New Writer.
- "The Lost Land: a tale of a Cromwellian Irish Town." By Julia M. Crottie.
- "A Tale of a Lonely Parish." By F. Marion Crawford.
- "The Redemption of David Corson." By Charles Frederic Goss.
- "That Sweet Enemy." By Katharine Tynan.

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