

The Annual Report of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies is very encouraging. Notwithstanding the retirement of many old friends from the House of Commons, about one-third of the present Parliament consists of Members who have already supported the Women's Suffrage Bill. The number of friendly members returned shows a gain upon the last Parliament of 1895. 274 members who have been returned have declared themselves to be friendly to our cause, and we hope these gentlemen will not think us censorious if we express the hope that they may give us work as well as words in support of the Bill next session.

Steps were taken this year to include on the Executive Committee of the National Union representatives from all the Women's Suffrage Societies in our Colonies. By these means it is hoped to bring into closer touch the work done here, and in the colonies, for the political enfranchisement of women, and also to promote a feeling of mutual encouragement and hope in striving for one common aim.

A Book of the Week.

NUMBER ONE AND NUMBER TWO.*

ONE is always glad to welcome a new story from the hand which gave us the "Rose Garden," and Miss Peard's new novel shows that her hand has lost none of its cunning.

The story is a quiet one, but it is very interesting. Miss Peard, like many another of her craft, has been to Egypt; and the magic of the desert, and of that civilization, so old, so wonderful, so full of mystery, has gripped her as it grips many, and she has made it the background of a tale. This background is used in just precisely the right way. There is no attempt at archæology, the point of view is simply that of the ordinary tourist, the desert and the camping out give merely the necessary local colour.

Bride Kennedy, a well-to-do young English girl, is dallying in Cairo on her way back from spending a cold season in India. Bride is in no hurry to get to England, for two reasons. First, she lives with a married sister, whose husband, one Gilbert, is the pet aversion of his sister-in-law. One of the quaintest things in the book, is the way in which the allusions to this Gilbert—who never appears—are worked in, so that one feels one knows him quite well, although not even a letter from him appears in the pages. One of the best scenes, in Miss Peard's peculiarly delicate manner, is that in which Bride is reading a number of a magazine, sent out to her by her sister.

"Leila sent it to me, and I can't think why; this article hits out rather straight at fussiness; I think I'll send it back again—marked, 'To Gilbert.'"

"Whose is it?"

"Bride turned to the end, and laid it down with a gasp."

"What's the shock?"

"It's by Gilbert! That's why Leila sent it! Oh, how horrid and abominable!"

Secondly and more importantly, Bride has been jilted; this accounts for the bitter waywardness which runs like a streak through all her conduct.

She was jilted by Arthur Myles, and has the unreasonable but perfectly natural feeling that all men

* By F. M. Peard. (Macmillan and Co.)

are alike, and that their professions of love are not worth much.

Major Mostyn, the Number Two, who, in due time, succeeds to the unworthy Number One, is a delightful person; the kind of man who loves but once, and strongly; not at all a good hand at making love, but a past master in the art of loving truly and deeply.

The episode of the young officer who falls in love with the "second-rate girl," Bride's disdain, and the tragic development of the situation, are well given.

The book abounds with clever little sketches of globe trotters, all evidently touched off from the life. The best are perhaps Miss Bretherton and Mrs. Bennett. Miss Bretherton, the energetic lady who moves about the world seeking some party on whom to tack herself as a travelling companion, is peculiarly convincing. And the intelligent Hume girls, who know all about hieroglyphics, and call their mother "Goosey" by way of a pet name, are also in the category of "people one has met."

Finally Bride elects to be married at Gibraltar, but is mournfully certain that even that distance will not deter "Gilbert" from being present at the ceremony.

"Gilbert would then marry us, you see, and—O Roger; isn't there a sermon or something at the end? Then they'll come—they'll all come. He couldn't resist the chance of giving me one last lecture."

G. M. R.

Verses.

1901.

An age too great for thought of ours to scan,
A wave upon the sleepless sea of time
That sinks and sleeps for ever, ere the chime
Pass that salutes with blessing, not with ban,
The dark year dead, the bright year born for man,
Dies: all its days that watched man cower and
climb,

Frail as the foam, and as the sun sublime,
Sleep sound as they that slept ere these began.

Our mother earth, whose ages none may tell,
Puts on no change; time bids not her wax pale
Or kindle, quenched or quickened, when the knell
Sounds, and we cry across the veering gale
Farewell—and midnight answers us, Farewell;
Hail—and the heaven of morning answers, Hail.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE.

—Saturday Review.

What to Read.

"The Sick and Wounded in South Africa: What I Saw and Said of Them and of the Army System." By Mr. Burdett-Coutts, M.P.

"A Vagabond in Asia." By Edmund Candler.

"Oliver Cromwell." By John Morley.

"Roberts of Pretoria: the Story of His Life." By J. S. Fletcher.

"Kim." By Rudyard Kipling (in *Cassell's Magazine*).

"Foes in Law." By Rhoda Broughton.

"Number One and Number Two." By Frances M. Peard.

"Pharaoh's Daughter and other Stories." By W. Waldorf Astor.

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