

popular with the Midwives themselves. Miss Margaret Breay said she would welcome registration under suitable conditions, but speaking as a trained nurse and midwife nothing would induce her to take out an annual licence.

Mrs. Fenwick inquired whether any other body of workers were licensed annually. Dr. Humphreys said solicitors were. (In this case it appears that there is no power vested in the licensing board to revoke the license, and the fee is merely enforced to provide an income for the working expenses of the governing body.) Another speaker said she had for years supported the Bill, but for the future she should oppose it on principle. It appeared to her to be dangerous to the liberty of these trained workers, and she should oppose it on this ground. Mrs. Sheldon Amos asked that a vote should be taken on the licensing question, when it was found that the meeting was equally divided on this point.

A Book of the Week.

THE BENEFACTRESS.*

To the pure joy of all who value the priceless gift of humour, "Elizabeth" has written a novel. Not only that, but she has written a wholly delightful one. Nothing can possibly be more enviable than the position of the woman who, this autumn, can sit with her toes on the fender-stool, and "The Benefactress" in her hands. What hours of joy and delicate amusement are before her, especially if she happen to know anything of Germany and Teutonic standpoints!

The *Spectator*, in an able notice of the book, accused the author of drawing her portraits with the same remorseless exposure of latent unpleasantnesses which Mr. Sargent exhibited in the portrait which was the sensation of this year's Academy; in this there is some truth. Elizabeth doubtless has a pen that bites, and her experience of the German woman has apparently not been a pleasant one. But it should be remembered that the most charming character in the whole book is a German, and also that the portrait of Lady Estcourt (*geborene* Dobbs, of Birmingham), is put in fully as unsparingly as those of the Chosen Ladies.

Anna Estcourt, the young, portionless sister of an impecunious baronet, who has retrieved his own fortunes by marriage with Susie Dobbs, but whose capacity for endurance gives out wholly after the first few years of marriage, has arrived at the point of getting sick of everything, and brushing her hair plainly back behind her ears, when her German uncle dies, and leaves her an estate in Pomerania, bringing in about a couple of thousand a year. This estate is under the care of Dellwig, a typical German, with the correct German views as to the intrinsic inferiority of the best of women to the worst of men. The account of Anna's arrival upon her property, in company with her sister Susie, her niece Letty, the governess, and the lady's maid, is a piece of description wholly admirable and extremely amusing. Anna's total ignorance of German etiquette makes her two bitter enemies in the Dellwigs at once. As would be natural in England, she invites the clergyman and his wife to dinner on the first opportunity, never realizing their social position, nor that Mrs. Dellwig's attitude towards the *Frau*

* by the Author of *Elizabeth* and *her German Garden*.
(Macmillan.)

Pastorin has hitherto been one of condescension, whereas now she sees herself actually left out in the cold, for nothing could be farther from Anna's thoughts than to invite her farm bailiff and his wife to dinner.

But this is mere preliminary. Anna, in her joyful gratitude to the good old uncle who has made her independent, conceives the idea of receiving into her house twelve needy and neglected ladies, who have known the miseries of dependence, and adopting them as sisters for evermore. To accomplish this she resorts to the insane method of advertisement, aided and abetted by the foolish pastor, who applauds her piety, and quite fails to mark her lack of common sense. The first consignment of the Chosen consists of three ladies, two of whom are "*geboren*," and one "*bürgerliche*." Nobody who does not know Germany will appreciate the feelings of the two first towards the latter, for our social distinctions in England are certainly smudged at the edges. The demeanour of the three towards their Benefactress, their mutual plots, jealousies and petty meannesses, are all laid bare. One could quote columns from this book, the difficulty would be to make a selection. Perhaps the funniest part of all is the arrival of the Chosen, and Anna's separate visit to each, to see if they have all they can possibly want.

The one criticism one can make, is that the author has not "finished up" her book as one would have liked. We yearn for a chapter as to the disposal of the Chosen, the fate of delightful Princess Ludwig, the arrangements made by Axel and Anna as to their future, and the attempts of his selfish and contemptible family to "make it up." Of all this we are defrauded. Will not Elizabeth write another chapter to her next edition, and "finish up," as the children say?

G. M. R.

What to Read.

"Diaries of the Emperor Frederick." Edited by Marguerite von Poschinger. Translated by Frances A. Welby.

"The Life of Lord Russell of Killowen. By R. Barry O'Brien.

"Behind the Scenes in the Transvaal." By D. M. Wilson, the first Gold Commissioner in the Transvaal.

"Chronicles of the House of Borgia." By Frederick Baron Corvo.

"The Portion of Labour." By Mary E. Wilkins.

"The Marchioness." By Florence Hodgson Burnett.

"Young Barbarians." By Ian Maclaren.

"Captain Bluit." By Max Adeler.

"D'Ri and I: a Tale of Daring Deeds in the Second War with the British; being the Memoirs of Colonel Ramon Bell, U.S.A." By Irving Bacheller.

"Frédérique, a Bachelor Woman." By Marcel Prévost. Translated by Ellen Marriage.

Coming Event.

Thursday, November 21st. — Quarterly Council Meeting of the Matrons' Council of Great Britain and Ireland at the Matron's House, St. Bartholomew's Hospital. Miss Isla Stewart, President, in the Chair, 4 p.m.

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