

movement in those two States was practically ensured. South Australia and Western Australia had adopted adult suffrage, and the influence of the success of the movement in four out of six States presaged its success in the remainder. He was at one time an opponent of the movement, having been impressed by many arguments which still no serious reasoner could despise. But experience was the right guide in all such matters. It became his duty to observe the results of women's suffrage, and he was not able to find that in any case the evils usually predicted had resulted from the granting of women's suffrage. He had no doubt as to the future of the women's vote in Australia. If he had he would not have brought forward that measure as part of the policy of the Federal Government. He was not called on to say, in support of the position he had taken up, that it was necessary to show that women's suffrage bestowed enormously great advantages on the community at large. That, however, was no element in the proof. It was necessary to show that as the thing was logically correct it ought to be granted unless evil followed in its track. He did not speak to them as an enthusiast: a subject so momentous as women's suffrage should not be treated with enthusiasm, but with earnest thought. He was of opinion that the success of the movement in the United Kingdom would tend in some measure to promote the unity of the Empire, because he could not think that the success of the movement was very far from its complete achievement in any part of the Empire where the British citizen was self-governing. Lady Henry Somerset having thanked Sir Edmund Barton, the deputation withdrew.

A Book of the Week.

HOLY MATRIMONY.*

This is a book of the season which, although not to be described as brand-new, must on no account be passed over.

It deals, with much penetration and insight, with the problem which seems to be the absorbing pre-occupation of the moment—how to be happy, though married.

We think that, in groping her way through the convolutions of the maze, the clever authoress rather loses sight of the fact that the search after happiness, as the aim of existence, is by no means the monopoly of the married. Is the percentage of those who lead contented lives greater among the single? We trow not. The true answer, in all probability, to the whole question, is simply this: that the very fact of setting one's own happiness before one, as the end of existence, precludes the possibility of attaining it. It is that selfishness, which is the hall-mark of the age, not the too finely adjusted nervous systems, which makes us intolerant, exacting, querulous, and steeped in self pity. "What can he give me?—in money, rank, social station, or devotion?" Such is the question asked by the modern bride; never, "What can I do for him?"

Baroness Brückner—the woman who has made two marriages, both failures—studies the question in the person of the two well-born, portionless girls, Bertha and Irene. Bertha makes the marriage of prudence, with the rich parvenu, Blumberg; Irene, the natural

marriage of love, with the scantily endowed Claudius Hayn.

The author is particularly skilful in tracing for us the outcome of these two marriages. For Bertha, from first to last, it is not possible to have sympathy. She is so completely selfish, so willing to take all and give nothing back, so callous to the suffering of the man whom she has married absolutely for no other reason than that he can give her the luxury she craves.

But for Irene, so ill-equipped for the long, stern struggle with poverty, one has much sympathy. But in the account of her sufferings the author seems unintentionally to point a moral which apparently has not occurred to herself. Most young couples of the present day, situated like Claudius and Irene, would, in all probability, realise that their limited means would not be compatible with an unlimited family. Most of Irene's difficulties seem to arise from her fast-arriving children, whom she cannot hope to rear in the station in which they were born.

As the Baroness so shrewdly points out, one pair cannot alter social conditions; and it is the gradual slipping down, out of one's own circle, out of one's own station, which constitutes the almost unbearable sting.

But, after all, the answer to it all lies deeper than the talented author of "Holy Matrimony" cares to probe. Yet the very title of her book suggests it, in one word.

The thinkers of to-day do not realise that the life-long union of the man and woman is a Christian institution, and becomes impossible with the decay of the spiritual life. "Dreary were this earth, if earth were all," must be sometimes the cry of every soul, however happily mated. There is no issue from the enigma of human suffering, human mistakes, but in the knowledge that we are spiritual beings, and that the natural man cannot face and overcome these things.

It is only the matrimony which is holy which can be successful. Dorothea Gerard barely suggests as much within the pages of her most interesting book. Is it possible that she chose her title with deliberate intention? G. M. R.

What to Read.

"Folia Caduca." A New Book of Poems. By Robert Beacon, B.A.

"Bolingbroke and His Times: The Sequel." By Walter Sichel.

"The Utmost Bound of the Everlasting Hills: Memories of Christ's Frontier Force in North-Western India." By the Rev. A. R. Macduff, M.A.

"In Summer Shade." By Mary E. Mann.

"The Story of a Mother." By Jane H. Findlater.

"A Princess of the Hills." By Mrs. Burton Harrison.

Coming Events.

August 9th.—Coronation of their Majesties King Edward VII. and Queen Alexandra at Westminster Abbey.

August 11th.—Queen Alexandra distributes medals to the members of the staffs of the Imperial Yeomanry Hospitals who served during the late war, in the garden of Devonshire House, Piccadilly, 4 p.m.

* By Dorothea Gerard. Methuen.

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