

herbaceous flowers. Sir John Cockburn said that one of the most satisfactory points of the college was the ease with which the lady students obtained lucrative employment, 90 per cent. of those who had passed last year having been successful in obtaining appointments as gardeners.

Speaking on the fourth founders' day at Lady Warwick's Hostel at Reading, where women are taught horticulture and the lighter branches of agriculture, Mrs. Clare Fitzgibbon, of Toronto, secretary of the Dominion of Canada Women's Agricultural and Horticultural International Union, made an earnest appeal to English women to learn thoroughly such subjects as were taught at Reading and then to make their way to Canada, where a splendid future awaited all of them who had really qualified.

### A Book of the Week.

JOHN LOTT'S ALICE.\*

This book is one which cannot be classed among the many light and temporary pieces of *persiflage* which writers like Mr. Benson or Mr. Seton Merriman give us—books which become out of date almost as soon as written. It is the true record of the simple, if not the short, annals of the poor. The writer speaks of what she evidently knows well, and there is every sign of the greatest fidelity to truth in the account of Pickersley and its inhabitants.

The fault of the story is that, as is almost always the case where fact has been rather too closely followed, the result is dismal, depressing, and unrelieved to a degree which will doubtless deter many readers from embarking upon it. The cause of the dismalness lies, not in the fact that the writer has not drawn upon her imagination, but that she has not been able to put in the whole picture. She has followed the high road, and if she had wandered into the meadows to gather flowers, she would not have had time to reach her destination before night. John Lott is an entirely uninteresting working-man; a weak man, married to a strong woman. Alice is full of courage, John is a coward; and the authoress of this book has Mr. Meredith's ardent admiration for courage. Alice is fearlessly honest; it is easy for a person who is never afraid to be honest. The first time that she discovers John to be afraid of her, she loses her respect for him. She is also clean and tidy; and except for the fact that she bullies her unfortunate little step-son, and is ill-tempered and violent, she is not a bad sort. The story tells the history of John's fall and degradation, also the fall and degradation of Benjamin Field, farmer and Wesleyan preacher. It is a difficult task for an author to set before herself; to maintain interest, for the space of 414 closely printed pages, in the destinies of these very limited minds, people of so rudimentary a class that one hardly looks upon them as responsible for their lapses from the straight path. Yet this Miss Burmester succeeds in doing to a very great extent. The book is not *saisissant*, but it is so true, that you go on with it. The characters are not puppets dancing on to destruction in order that their creator may pile up the agony, and let them die deserted and despairing. Limited they may be;

\* By Frances G. Burmester. Grant Richards.

their minds unformed, their characters dull, their outlook narrow; but they are never left to themselves; God works in them, and remembers them, and their conflicts with the powers unseen are as real as though they were emperors.

Lady Cochrane, the only person in the book whom one could welcome as a companion, is not nearly so successful as the others. Her call upon the dissenting farmer, and her ridiculous and uncalled-for suggestions about his altering his house, are the only things in the book that strike one as unreal. Miriam Field and her lover are wholly uninteresting, and the writer lets us know that she feels them to be so, entreating that she may be excused from "boring herself" with an account of their feelings.

We have then, only the three, John Lott, his wife, and the rascally preacher to fall back on; but out of these materials, the writer shows her very real power.

The account of the baby's death, and of the Methodist Revival meeting, are two of the best scenes. The pen which wrote them ought to achieve much.

G. M. R.

### Who are Great?

Who are the great?

They who have boldly ventured to explore  
Unsounded seas, and lands unknown before;  
Soar'd on the wings of science wide and far,  
Measur'd the sun and weigh'd each distant star;  
Pierc'd the dark depths of ocean and of earth,  
And brought uncounted wonders into birth;  
Repell'd the pestilence, restrain'd the storm,  
And given new beauty to the human form;  
Wakened the voice of reason, and unfurled  
The page of truthful knowledge to the world;  
They who have toiled and studied for mankind,  
Arous'd each slumbering faculty of mind;  
Taught us a thousand blessings to create;  
These are the nobly great!

R. B. M.

—*Indian Medical Record.*

### What to Read.

"The Blessing of Peace." A Sermon preached before Their Majesties the King and Queen in St. Paul's Cathedral. By the Right Rev. A. F. Winnington-Ingram, D.D.

"William Hazlitt." By Augustine Birrell.

"A Friend of Nelson." By Horace G. Hutchinson.

"The Conqueror: Being the True and Romantic Story of Alexander Hamilton." By Gertrude Atherton.

"An English Girl in Paris."

"The Passion of Mahael." By Lilian Bowen-Rowlands.

"Marta." By Paul Gwynne.

"A Book of Stories." By G. S. Street.

### Coming Events.

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

August 20th to 27th.—The Royal Institute of Public Health will hold a Congress at Exeter. President, the Earl of Iddesleigh.

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