

Mlle. Chauvin and Mme. Petit were the first to profit by the new law. Their example has been followed by few Frenchwomen, for the career of a barrister is arduous and difficult, and offers little chance of immediate recompense."

Dr. Oldfield, in moving a resolution for the abolition of capital punishment recently, contended that since women had no voice in the making of the laws their claim to exemption from the barbarous penalties of the past should be the first to be considered. If men chose to go on hanging one another they had no right, in the face of the modern researches in psychological phenomena, to go on hanging women.

The new Lyceum Club for Ladies has secured premises close to Piccadilly Circus, and the election of "original" members will take place early this month.

The Technical Education Board of the London County Council is prepared to receive applications for the post of Lecturer on Hygiene, First Aid to the Injured, Sick Nursing, and the Care and Management of Infants. Candidates must have had previous experience as trained nurses, and must hold certificates or diplomas relating to their knowledge of the subjects on which they lecture. The salary is £100 a year.

## A Book of the Week.

### THE HEART OF ROME.\*

Mr. Crawford is one of those authors who never grow tricky. His style seems to expand in breadth and lucidity; his matter is ever fresh; his heart, like the great heart of existence, beats for ever like a boy's; and his present novel is as charming as his last, although it has not the singular interest which clung around Cecilia's memories of her previous incarnations.

The very air of romance hangs mysterious, wonderful, fascinating around the old Palazzo Conti; and as, in the opening chapter, the reader arrives in the courtyard of the Palazzo, and, with the Baroness Volterra, climbs the marble staircase in search of the tragedy within—the tragedy of the final fall of a great house—one is conscious in a marked degree of the author's power of creating atmosphere. The Conti family is of inferior interest, with the exception of the youngest daughter, Sabina. Sabina is a maiden of far less power of character than Cecilia was. But her creator has the power of making girls simple without making them silly; a thing few men achieve. The pathos of Sabina's position is what first appeals to Marino Malipieri, the young engineer of noble family whom Volterra, the creditor who has absorbed the Palazzo Conti in his nets, employs to search the foundations of the historic place for the treasure which, as rumour has it, lies hid there.

The Baroness Volterra, as eager to be in Roman society as her husband is to dip his fingers in Roman pockets, has offered to take care of Sabina until her family has had time to make some attempt to grapple with its broken fortunes. In Volterra's house Malipieri meets the forlorn Sabina, abandoned by her own

people, patronised by the vulgar Volterras, and beggared by the rapacity of her brother and sister. She is a figure to inspire chivalry and command sympathy, and Malipieri bestows both in so unstinted a measure that, before he knows what has happened, he is deeply in love. Then comes the *contretemps* which the author manages with so much skill.

Under the Palazzo Conti flows a portion of those mysterious underground waters which are here and there in Rome, flowing, as they seem to have flowed for ages, no man quite knows whence or whither. These "Lost Waters" were apparently, in the most ancient period of the building, used as a water supply, and to this end a well was built up from the cellars into the upper floors, which could be filled at will. In succeeding ages, when the place was no longer required as a well, the mediæval genius adapted the shaft to its own ends. It became an *oubliette*; and the water was employed to drown and rot the corpses of enemies thus made away with.

Malipieri, in his excavations, lays bare the horrible secrets of the *oubliette*, and also the traditionary treasure. Having found this, he determines that the first person to behold it, before it is moved or touched, shall be little Sabina, the true heiress of the find. To this end he carefully plans a secret visit from her, arranging all details of chaperonage, so that the most censorious tongue in Rome could find no fault; and then, by an utterly unforeseen fatality, when he and she are in the vaults, the water is let into the well, completely cutting off their return.

The whole description of this incident is masterly in its detail, its reality, its lack of effort, its note of good feeling struck throughout. But the result is that the well-meaning Malipieri hopelessly compromises Sabina's reputation, and then the bitter truth comes out that he is not free to remedy matters by making her his wife.

The resolution of the problem shall not be divulged.  
G. M. R.

## What to Read.

- "One Pretty Pilgrim's Progress." By Florence Bright.
- "Children of the Village." By Maud Beddington.
- "The People of the Abyss." By Jack London.
- "Doctor Xavier." By Max Pemberton.
- "Barbe of Grand Bayou." By John Oxenham.

## Coming Events.

January 14th.—Ball in aid of repairing the floors of the old wards of Charing Cross Hospital. Whitehall Rooms, Hôtel Métropole.

January 18th.—The Lord Mayor presides at the Annual Court of Governors of the Royal Waterloo Hospital for Children and Women, Waterloo Bridge Road, at the Mansion House. 3 p.m.

January 26th.—The Lord Mayor presides at a meeting at the Mansion House in support of an appeal for St. Bartholomew's Hospital.

February 5th.—Mrs. Stanbury (Women's Local Government Society) will address the Matrons' Council on the Civic Rights of Women, at 431, Oxford Street, London, W. 8 p.m.

\* By F. Marion Crawford. (Macmillan.)

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)