

Elba to meet in 1815 his final overthrow at Waterloo. For it was on January 14th, 1814, that Catherine Gurney first saw the light in the Quaker home of Samuel and Elizabeth Gurney at Ham House, West Ham, Essex.

In her early days, as Catherine Gurney, Lady Buxton was very closely identified with the philanthropic and social work of her illustrious relative, Elizabeth Fry, who, with Mrs. Samuel Gurney, was largely instrumental in starting the first organisation in England for training nurses for the care of the sick poor. Lady Buxton has also a very clear recollection of the commencement of the London City Mission. Throughout life Lady Buxton has been an ardent supporter of the religious work connected with the British and Foreign Bible Society and the Church Missionary Society.

With quiet humour Mr. C. Kadano discoursed on "The Bringing-up of Japanese Girls" at a meeting of the Japan Society. Mr. Kadano confessed that he had had no personal experience which entitled him to speak on the subject of his lecture, and he talked mainly of the ordinances or codes of morals which govern the life of the Japanese woman. These have all been left by male philosophers, who certainly had strong ideas upon the proper place of woman. In the course of his interesting paper Mr. Kadano described some standard works on codes of morals and conduct for girls and women, among which the "Onna Dai Gaku" (the Greater Learning for Women) is the best known and most important. The principles which are to be found in these books for women are practically the same in all. They preach what is called "The Three Obediences" (duties) of women. When young they must obey their parents; when married, their husbands; in their old age, their sons. They are taught reticence, self-sacrifice, and self-effacement.

From six to eighteen years of age the Japanese girl is at school, where she is compelled to spend more time over her books than do girls in this country, although under the influence of Western notions greater attention is being given to sports and physical culture. In Japan, young married couples generally live with the parents of the husbands, and girls are taught that they should love and obey their fathers-in-law and mothers-in-law even more than they do their own. The brides there are in dread of their mothers-in-law, but the men need not be in fear and trembling of their wives' mothers. The country is decidedly a place for men. These standard codes of morals and conduct for women were written by men for the benefit of women. No Japanese lady has yet written a code to be observed by men. As in other things, Japan is changing rapidly in regard to her women, as to their status. Yet these old maxims seem to form the framework to the new codes for women, written and unwritten. Visitors, male and female, to Japan, praise the women there, while they are rather severe on the men. Women are described as most womanly and sweet. Perhaps Japanese men, Mr. Kadano added, so severely criticised, think their women are so praised because they are properly brought up and treated by men. The Japanese wife has not been left untouched by the ideas of newer civilisations, but she still clings in large measure to those codes of morals which are enforced by the husbands.

A Book of the Week.

THE NEBULY COAT.*

There are many who think that Mr. Meade Falkner is our coming novelist. A perusal of "The Nebuly Coat" will show that for this belief there are many good reasons. The author knows something on many subjects. Architecture, heraldry, music, archæology, and something about religion are included in his list of qualifications. It is noteworthy that he does not, like so many of his contemporaries, rush in where angels might fear to tread; with his opinions upon things concerning which he has no information. This mastery of his subject-matter is a great, a most undoubted virtue; but he makes a far stronger appeal to his reader than is constituted by this. He has what we, for want of a better word, call atmosphere.

That is to say, he sees things through the medium of his own personality, and succeeds in setting them before us, so arranged that we see eye to eye with him. He uses materials which, in other hands, would easily become sensational, which might be called outworn. But to these he gives that perennial newness which this atmosphere of his own confers.

There is in his book no hero, no heroine. There is no human being in whom one is allowed to take a deep interest, except, perhaps, the poor old, half-drunken organist Sharnall, and dear old Miss Joliffe. Edward Westray is a young architect, who comes down to superintend the restorations which are being carried out by his firm in the old Minster Church of St. Sepulchre, Cullerne.

The ingenuity of the reader will be taxed to guess what place the author had in mind when drawing his picture of Cullerne, the old southern seaport, deserted by the receding waters.

The collapse of the tower makes one think of Chichester; but Cullerne is not the seat of a Bishopric. The description of the town makes one think of Rye; but there is no wide stone screen, with the organ above it, in the wonderful old parish church at Rye. Perhaps the author intentionally made his Cullerne a blend of many places; and this is admirably done, the description of the locality and various little local touches being thrown in with that air of having a real place in mind which is so convincing.

The Nebuly Coat is the cognizance of the old house of Blandamer. Barry nebuly, vert and argent, it glimmers in the south transept window when Westray first visits the Minster.

This tepid young man becomes more or less involved in the scandal and mystery which overhang the Blandamer title. Lord Blandamer is a murderer and a cheat. He marries Anastasia Joliffe, who is really the heiress of the Blandamer title.

And here we come to the weak point in the writer's harness. He knows nothing about the heart of a girl.

Anastasia is meant, apparently, to be a sympathetic character. Her author evidently admires her, though carefully abstaining from any such open admiration as might lay him open to the charge of being commonplace. She marries this man, who has committed one, if not two, murders, who loves her not one whit, who marries her simply in order that his own claim to the title may never be questioned, well knowing that he has no right whatever to the name he bears.

* By Meade Falkner. Arnold.

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