

A Book of the Week.

THE LADY OF LYTE.*

Miss Hope, in this story, continues her vein of narrative based on historical research. "The Lady of Lyte" is a study of the various religious and political parties in England in the reign of the Merry Monarch. There is much careful work in it, but the author seeks to cover so large a field that a great part of the book contains tantalising allusions to events which are never elucidated. One would like to know Miss Hope's exact authority for the suggestion that Algernon Sidney was in receipt of a private pension from the King of France: and that the woman who threw a stool at the priest who started reading the liturgy in Edinburgh was not Jennie Geddes, the fish wife, as commonly supposed, but a Court lady masquerading in her dress. If this last be true, surely a whole novel could be based on so fascinating a theme!

The Lady of Lyte, who gives its title to the book, is not the heroine. That post is accorded to her aunt and guardian, Lady Anne Nugent; while the hero is not the dour young Puritan, Chidiack Clifford, but Claud Cunningham, Abbé de Trévenec, the disguised Jesuit, who loved Anne in their hot youth, but unhappily killed her brother, who was a spy. Kathleen, the Lady of Lyte, is a very young, unsophisticated, and *ingénue* person, who apparently does not even know of the King's reputation. In the style of most heroines in this species of novel, she roams alone in the alleys of the Court pleasure garden, and is at once met and insulted by the kind of courtier who seems to haunt such places for the sake of giving some young man a chance to draw his sword in defence of injured beauty.

But the reader must not imagine from this that the book is cast on conventional lines. It is from excess of material, not lack of it, that Miss Hope suffers.

Shaftesbury, Bishop Ken, Sir Isaac Newton, Penn the Quaker, and Titus Oates the conspirator, all move in her pages and obtain but brief scope for their claims to our attention. She has given much care to her topography, and we learn that Lady Anne Nugent and her niece were lodged at a farm in the tiny village of Leicester Fields, and were attacked by footpads between that and Whitehall; also that Chidiack Clifford's father resides in "the little hamlet of Bethnal Green."

But the main interest of the story centres round Anne Nugent's views concerning religious toleration—views much in advance of her period, yet quite conceivable, at a time when so many opposing elements surged together in the whirlpool of London. There is much thought in the book, scattered throughout it in short, pithy phrases. The relations between Anne and Claude Cunningham are given with charming delicacy and reticence.

There is one charming turn of thought, in which the various differing views of theologians are compared to the spokes in a wheel. These are farthest apart at the point where they are held by an outward bond, and grow ever nearer as they reach the centre! Surely that is a beautiful metaphor!

All Miss Hope's work makes us look for some-

* By Graham Hope. (Methuen.)

thing really good from her hand. A little less "period" and more character study, a little more unity and less detail, and she ought to write a really good historical novel. G. M. R.

The Champions of Peace.

All over—the wide world over
Rings a music clear and sweet:
The ripple of children's laughter,
And the patter of little feet.
All over—the wide world over,
Wherever a life is young,
Sounds the universal language:
The lisp of a little tongue.

Eyes brown as the nuts in autumn,
Eyes deep as a moon-lit night,
Eyes blue as the skies of summer—
And all of them clear and bright!
Some wake to the solemn desert
And gaze on the sleeping plain,
And some on the restless billows
Of a grey and wintry main.

All over—the wide world over
Comes the stretching of little hands,
And they join with their little brothers
In the desert and distant lands;
All over—the wide world over
They are forming a living chain
That shall bind hard hearts to kindness
And shall bring us peace again.

* * * *

For this is the age of the children,
Of the children, rich and poor;
And the love man bears to the children
Makes war upon his war.

* * * *

Stretch forth your hands, sweet victors,
Smile forth on our release;
Sing wordless songs of ransom,
Ring in the Age of Peace!

LINA MOLLETT.

What to Read.

- "The Man Roosevelt." By Francis E. Leupp.
- "Great Japan." A Study of National Efficiency. By Alfred Stead.
- "A Servant of the Public." By Anthony Hope.
- "An Improbable Idyll." By Dorothea Gerard.
- "The Patient Man." By Percy White.
- "Lady Jim of Curzon Street." By Fergus Hume.
- "Miss Bellard's Inspiration." By W. D. Howells.
- "Starve Crow Farm." By Stanley Weyman.

Coming Events.

September 20th.—Lord Alverstone opens the new Cottage Hospital at Shanklin, erected by him in memory of his only son, the Hon. Arthur Webster.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)