

In strong contrast to the vitality of the meeting of the Women's Social and Political Union was the failure of the Society, founded by Anti-Suffragists with the object of fighting the Union, to secure an audience. At the meeting at Anderton's Hotel last week, in spite of the fact that £5,000 had been promised to the funds, £4,000 conditionally upon support being accorded, the promoters of this nameless Society were only able to secure an audience of two.

Those of our readers who have difficulty in obtaining the Peri-Lusta Threads—the beauty and cheapness of which for embroidery purposes we have often mentioned—will be glad to know that Messrs. W. H. Head and Sons, "The Golden Tassel," Sloane Street, London, S.W., will carry out any post orders sent direct to them. This should prove a boon to those living in country places.

Book of the Week.

THE DREAM AND THE BUSINESS.*

The very sudden death of Mrs. Craigie gives to the perusal of her latest work a melancholy interest, apart from that which her cleverness always demands.

It is said by those who knew her, that in the "Dream and the Business" she believed herself to have attained depth and height greater than in her previous work.

Reluctantly we must confess ourselves not in accord with this opinion. The book is full of ability, full of thought, full of sentences one would like to quote. But, as a whole, it is most unsatisfactory. The tendency of the author to stand quite outside her characters—to give an account of them, not their story—has never been so strongly marked.

The scheme of the book is exactly that of the average society novel of the day. We have a brace or so of childless, idle couples, restlessly trying to justify their failure to get any satisfaction out of life, by intellectual considerations. In juxtaposition to these, the Nonconformist father, preaching hell and damnation, and by his narrowness, alienating the minds of the younger generation.

The varying degrees of intellectual flirtation gone through by the various characters are very minutely described. Mr. Gladstone is brought on the scene, and made to converse. The impression left on the mind after a perusal of the whole is simply that of fruitless questing, of restlessness, of craving egoism, of the general unsatisfactoriness of things. One feels that idleness is the mother of discontent, and that this is far more true when the intellect is developed.

One feels that if Tessa had had half a dozen boys and girls to look after, she would have seen nothing amiss with Marlesford; and if Burgh Wallis had left Sophy a widow not only unprovided for, but with a child to keep; the dormant possibilities of her nature might have asserted themselves. But nothing in Mrs. Craigie's novel intervenes between the barren characters and themselves. It is a far

more desolating picture than the lurid descriptions of the sins of the Smart Set of which we hear so much.

Perhaps this is what the author intends.

There is one most noteworthy passage in the book—a letter from James Firmalden, Nonconformist minister, to Tessa Marlesford, Roman Catholic. It is to be found on pages 331 and following. One longs to quote, but to do so in part would be to spoil the whole.

But let us extract just this:—

"Nonconformity in England has been so much impressed by the Old Testament that it might almost be called the Jewish religion without the Synagogue; the materialism without the profundity; the love of the present without the vision of the future; the Commandments without Rabbinitism."

Is not this true of non-Catholicism not only in England but all over the world? Is it not true of the Boers? Was it not true of the Puritans?

One could almost wish that Mrs. Craigie had cast her thoughts as an essay rather than a novel: she could then have said more clearly what she really meant.

The remarkable letter of James Firmalden closes with those wonderful lines—

"O Dieu de vérité, pour qui seul je soupire
Je me lasse d'ouïr, je me lasse de lire
Mais mon pas de te dire
C'est toi seul que je veux!"

May such have been the last thought of her who was called so suddenly out from the material to the spiritual world!

G. M. R.

What to Read.

"Lady Fitzmaurice's Husband." By Arabella Kenealy.

"The Ladder to the Stars." By Jane Findlater.

"Profit and Loss." By John Oxenham.

"The Comedy of Age." By Desmond Coke.

"The Viper of Milan." By Marjorie Bowen.

"My Dog." By Maurice Maeterlinck. Translated by A. Teixeira de Mattos.

Coming Events.

September 29th.—Meeting of the Executive Committee, Society for the State Registration of Trained Nurses, 431, Oxford Street. 4.0 p.m.

October 2nd.—Church Congress at Barrow-in-Furness.

A Word for the Week.

As ships meet at sea a moment together, when words of greeting must be spoken, and then away upon the deep, so men meet in this world. And I think we should cross no man's path without hailing him, and if he needs, giving him supplies.—Henry Ward Beecher.

* John Oliver Hobbes. (Fisher Unwin.)

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