

Resolutions urging the Government to adopt, during the Autumn Session, the Local Authorities (Qualification of Women) Bill have been passed at no fewer than ninety meetings held all over the country during the past few weeks.

On November 2nd *The Women's Tribune* re-appears under the title of *Women and Progress*, the price remains one penny weekly, and those wishing to order it can do so from 18 Buckingham Street, Strand, W.C.

Mme. Curie, who has been appointed to the chair held by her husband at the Sorbonne, Paris, will deliver her inaugural lecture next Monday. Her subject will be the theory of ions in gases, and radio-activity. The event is looked forward to with great interest in the scientific world, as this is the first appearance of a lady in a professorial chair at the Sorbonne.

Book of the Week.

LISTENER'S LURE.*

That Mr. Lucas had written a novel was delightful hearing. His delicate fancy and distinct sense of humour rendered it likely that he could instruct but quite certain that he could amuse us. Even the discovery that "Listener's Lure" was cast in the form of letters did not deter us. The author, in a way, apologises for the vehicle of narration chosen by him by quoting on his title-page the beloved Miss Austen, "Nobody cares for a letter."

If we carry out in our minds a little comparison between him and the great novelist whom he so often quotes, not only on his title-page, we shall remember that even she first turned to the letter as a means of revealing the characters of her personages. We shall also remember that she afterwards abandoned this method and never returned to it. And we may hope that Mr. Lucas will follow her in this.

To say so much is by no means to say that "Listener's Lure" is a failure. On the contrary, it is delightful. It is also quite a daring satire upon the very latest London. We suspect that Mr. Lucas chose the epistolary method because of one great advantage it possesses for the writer who is afraid of strong emotion. You can simply leave out all that part. Here we may just say that we wish Mr. Lucas had taken fuller advantage of this fact. But alas! He does actually give us the letter in which Lynn Harborton proposes to Edith. And it is such an unsatisfactory letter! To begin with, Lynn Harborton would not have proposed by letter, since there was nothing to prevent his asking the question personally. To go on with, if he were really the man his letters made him appear, he could not have proposed like that. We think of the dear, delightful Mr. Knightley, and we writhe as we remember what we would always fain forget—that he addressed the girl of his heart in these terms: "My dearest Emma, for dearest you will ever be to me, whatever may be the result of this morning's conversation."

* By E. V. Lucas. (Methuen.)

Such an address, one would think, would be more than enough to wreck the happiness of two lives; but to-day we do not use the polished periods which really were in vogue in the days when Mr. Knightley found Emma in the shrubbery, and—without previous preparation, mind you—fired off upon her that paralysing adjuration!

But the charm in this book lies in the quaint morsels of good advice, shrewd observation, and sly fun, which are peppered all over it so as to give the reviewer a very bad time in trying to select something for quotation. Miss Fielding, the sensible London lady, old enough to be able to take a steady sensible view of the world she lives in, is one of the best correspondents. Here is a fragment of one of her letters:

If you ever have any children, I implore you to bring them up to expect misery. Half the trouble in this world comes from the idea that we are expected to be happy. If I had children, I should drive the opposite notion into them, and then every happy moment that came to them would be pure joy instead of a source of uneasiness as it now is."

There is one fascinating old lady who asked the sporting rector to tea, and had a large placard hung on the wall, as follows:—

"Should clergymen have their own shooting?
Our Lord had none."

To read the book is to chuckle continually. But there is pathos too. And in the name of common-sense, what more can one ask? G. M. R.

Little Boy Blue.

The little toy dog is covered with dust,
But sturdy and stanch he stands;
And the little toy soldier is red with rust
And his musket moulds in his hands.
Time was when the little toy dog was new
And the soldier was passing fair,
And that was the time when our Little Boy Blue
Kissed them and put them there.

"Now, don't you go till I come," he said,
"And don't you make any noise!"
So toddling off to his trundle-bed
He dreamt of the pretty toys.
And as he was dreaming, an angel song
Awakened our Little Boy Blue,—
Oh, the years are many, the years are long,
But the little toy friends are true.

Ay, faithful to Little Boy Blue they stand,
Each in the same old place,
Awaiting the touch of a little hand,
The smile of a little face.
And they wonder, as waiting these long years—
through,
In the dust of that little chair,
What has become of our Little Boy Blue
Since he kissed them and put them there.

BY EUGENE FIELD.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)