

State. It is poor consolation to be told that women share in their husband's honours, for this may mean the exaltation of the undeserving.

We regret to record the death of Miss Lucy Dorothea Sparkes, well known to many for her work in starting the District Nurses' Home for Shoreditch and Bethnal Green, in connection with Queen Victoria's Jubilee Institute, at 80, Nicholls Square, Hackney Road, E., of which she was the Hon. Secretary and Treasurer. Up to the last she worked hard in the East End, but shortly before Christmas was attacked by influenza, which was followed by double pneumonia. She will be regretted by a large circle of friends and fellow-workers.

Book of the Week.

AFTER THE FAULT.*

The journalist as novelist is always a particularly interesting phenomenon to the Reviewer. It is very curious that the journalistic habit should be so apparent; but so it is. The novel of the journalist is unmistakable. It has good points; it is usually vivid, almost always pictorial; but it lacks continuity. It is episodic, and its view of character is almost always external.

I think most people will admit that this holds true, even of the prince of journalist-novelists, I mean Rudyard Kipling. Your journalist can write a short story; but his view of life is a bird's-eye view; he has no continuity, and he cannot enter into the souls of his characters, he must persistently regard them as troops manœuvring in masses, not as individuals, whose story is gradually evolved.

Thus Mr. Sherard is in good company when we tell him that he has the defects of his qualities. His qualities are undeniable. There are parts of this book, such as the police-court episode near the beginning, and more especially the arrival of the emigrant ship in New York Harbour, which are good writing, vigorous description, in short, the latter episode is more than fit to rank with Upton Sinclair.

It is in attempting psychology that Mr. Sherard shows us his limitations. As a journalist he is quite good; as a psychologist he is simply nowhere.

The book opens with the reception by a young husband of an anonymous letter assuring him of his wife's infidelity. This he believes at once, completely, finally.

Now, when a man jumps unhesitatingly to a belief in his wife's infidelity on the strength of an anonymous letter, one of two things must be true—Either the man is a beast: or he has the best reason for believing that his wife is one.

Neither of these things is so in Mr. Sherard's story. The man, though a weak and contemptible egotist, is by no means a bad sort; the woman appears to have given way to a sudden impulse, which is quite an exceptional thing, and to be, on the whole, not only a good woman, but a saint and a martyr.

Thus the psychology at once breaks down. The

author alienates our sympathy forthwith—we cannot believe in his husband and wife; we cannot therefore interest ourselves in them.

This is a pity, for the whole account of Pont-Aven and the grocer's widow is quite delightful, and if strung upon a lighter thread might have made excellent comedy.

A book which should deal with the after life of a husband and wife, in the circumstances indicated above, is a fascinating idea. But it needs the pen of one profoundly versed in the character not only of men but of women. It is a failure, but perhaps a failure on which the author is to be congratulated. He has at least essayed something big, and sketched out a line of conduct which must be called heroic, though his limitations prevent us from realising it.

We review the book here because it has certain qualities which are exceptional and seem to promise better things from the writer.

There is an absence of exaggeration, a consistent refusal of that strain after wit and cleverness which defaces so much modern writing.

If Mr. Sherard will make a study of individual character, as he has studied mankind in the mass, he ought to write a convincing book. G. M. R.

Pluck Wins.

"Pluck wins. It always wins!

Tho' days be slow

And night be dark twixt days that come and go,
Still, pluck will win. Its average is sure;

He gains the prize who can the most endure—

Who faces issues, and who never shirks,

Who waits and watches and who always works."

ANON.

Coming Events.

January 11th.—Lecture on Public Health and Hygiene by Dr. Newman, D.P.H., to the League of St. Bartholomew's Hospital Nurses, at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, E.C. 5.45 p.m.

January 29th.—Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Registered Nurses' Society, 431, Oxford Street, W. 5 p.m.*

January 31st.—Annual Meeting of the Matrons' Council of Great Britain and Ireland, 431, Oxford Street, W. 4 p.m.*

February 1st.—Meeting of Executive Committee of the Society for the State Registration of Trained Nurses, 431, Oxford Street, W. 4.30. p.m.*

A Word for the Week.

"Two men looked out from prison bars.
The one saw mud, the other stars."

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* By Robert H. Sherard. (Sisley.)

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