

tenants at moderate charges. The design for these flats, which are to be built round a central quadrangle, where croquet and tennis lawns will be provided, is charming. They will be ready for occupation next summer. Applications should be addressed to the Secretary, 33, Finsbury Square, E.C.

Book of the Week.

THE PRINCE OF DREAMERS.*

Once more Mrs. Steel takes her readers to India, and if Akbar the Magnificent is a Prince of Dreamers, as truly has the author proves herself a queen of romancers. We are frankly told that though there is much of truth in the historical facts, still she has drawn largely on her imagination, for some of the characters, as well as for some of the happenings. At the same time, so deftly has she thrown the glamour of the East over the whole, so interwoven fact with fiction, that the reader is fairly enthralled. It was a happy thought to select that particular period round which to weave her story, a period of great thinkers, reformers, may be dreamers, even as was the Great Mogul.

Elizabeth sat on the throne of England and during her reign, east and west, a wave of higher thought was flooding many countries. Mrs. Steele introduces us to Akbar when he was at the zenith of his power. We find him a man of forty sated with conquest, and enjoying a time of peace in Futilpur Sikri, his city of victory. Akbar was frankly a Socialist; having conquered, he now seeks how best to ameliorate the condition of his peoples. Himself a Mahomedan, he chooses, for his chief friends and advisers, Hindus, thereby giving great offence to men of his own faith. Thoroughly conservative themselves, they resent his liberal views and actions. All these historical details and intrigues in his Court surroundings are cleverly interwoven with the really engrossing romance. Nor is there any dearth of humour. The ladies in the harem are most entertaining. Auntie Rosebery, and "the Mother of Plumpness," frequently raise a smile.

Akbar's keen disappointment in his sons, especially Salem, the Heir Apparent, his patient forgiveness of constant ill-doing, are told with many touches of pathos. The three Englishmen who arrive at the Court of Akbar, bearing credentials from Elizabeth, remind us that this was the first time our countrymen had come to India, and they may be looked upon as the thin end of the wedge.

Of the two merchants, Ralph Fitch and John Newbery we hear little, but round William Leedes, the jeweller and cutter of stones, there is great surrounding interest. The fact that Akbar employs him to cut the great diamond called the "King's Luck," which he always wore in his turban, gives rise to much opposition and intrigue, in which all the principal characters are engaged. Mrs. Steel explains that women in India in the 16th century had far more liberty than they had

at a later date, otherwise it would have been impossible for some of them to take the prominent places they did.

Atma Devi, the "King's Charanu," is a beautifully conceived female character; in sharp contrast to her we have Siyale Yamin, the so-called "darling of the town." The introduction of Pâyândâr, the lost heir to the throne of Sinde, gives the mystic element without which the true atmosphere of an Eastern story is incomplete.

In our own troublous times this is a book to read and ponder over. We part from Akbar as he sits dreaming.

"Did he see the East intoxicated by the errors of the West, aping the horrors of a civilisation which has missed its way? which has forgotten . . . the despotism of Fate, whose eye is fixed not on the equality of the individual, but the ultimate outcome of Race." E. L. H.

VERSE.

"The work of the world is done by few;
God asks that a part be done by you."

SARAH K. BOLTON.

COMING EVENTS.

December 11th.—Central Midwives' Board Examination, Examination Hall, Victoria Embankment, W.C. The oral examination follows a few days later.

December 12th.—League of St. Bartholomew's Hospital Nurses. A Special General Meeting at the Hospital, 2.45 p.m.

AGENDA.—(1) Revision of Bye-Laws. (2) To consider proposition from Territorial Force re the Nursing of No. 1 Hospital, City of London.

Social Gathering, 4.30 p.m.

December 12th.—Dr. Macnamara, M.P., opens the new buildings of the Workhouse Infirmary at Willesden, 3 p.m.

December 15th.—Lecture by Dr. Ralph Vincent at the Infants' Hospital, Vincent Square, Westminster, on "Rachitis." 5 p.m.

THE ROYAL INFIRMARY, EDINBURGH.

Lectures.—Extra Mural Medical Theatre, 4.30 p.m. Trained Nurses cordially invited.

December 16th.—The Nature and Treatment of Neurasthenia, by Dr. Alexander Bruce.

A WORD FOR THE WEEK.

"My conviction is that you will never get really good, effective measures for housing, for temperance, or for other social reforms, until you get the millions of the women of the land to co-operate in such legislation. It is for that reason that I am standing here to-day to declare that in my judgment it is not merely the right of woman, but the interest of all, that you should call in the aid, the counsel, the inspiration, of woman to help in the fashioning of legislation which will improve, cleanse, purify, and fill with plenty the homes upon which the future destiny of this great commonwealth of nations depends."

THE RIGHT HON. D. LLOYD-GEORGE, M.P.,
At the Albert Hall.

* By Flora Annie Steel. (Heinemann.)

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