

Book of the Week.

LADY ELVERTON'S EMERALDS.*

The book is a slight one, but well written, and as such can be recommended to nurses who, at the close of a hard day's work, often want to read something which brings sustained interest, relaxation, and rest. The plot is uncommon. The heroine, Evelyn Ransome, should perhaps be more accurately described as "the leading lady," for heroine is not a word applicable to a girl who leads the man who loves her into an indiscretion which ends for him in five years' penal servitude, who never goes near him before the trial, or gives him an opportunity of justifying himself to her, if not to the world, and who, before he is liberated, is engaged to a jewel king, with a heart as hard and chill as one of his own diamonds.

The prologue shows us Evelyn Ransome and Ernest Wilderson in the dusk of a May day, as he put on her finger a ring he had sold his horse to buy. Later she dressed for him in the gown which she was to wear at a ball the next evening—a white brocade, shimmering, lustrous, soft; a glorious sheath to a lovely form. She had put white lilac blossoms in her hair, and a topaz chain, his gift, about her neck.

"But it calls for diamonds," she said, suddenly. "I can't wear these yellow things with this," and as he hid her good night he thought of a plan to procure for her the jewels she craved.

"They parted. May died that night, and June came in with a mutter of thunder and drench of chill rain, into which the man travelled alone."

When next we meet Evelyn it is at Claxton Hall, engaged to Mr. Harold Begbie.

"Men said that this Harold Begbie knew no human kindness and no mercy; that dreary tales of poverty were merely joys to him, since they gave him the chance of some new jewel, some stone to help in his new chain of sapphires—some quaint old ornament with rare black pearls about it. His keen eyes, peering through their pince-nez, seemed to find hidden flaws and cracks; his cold voice frightened the poor sellers into asking half what they had hoped for, and taking perhaps an eighth. There were human tears crystallised in the collector's pearl ropes; heart's blood in his fiery rubies; chilling, changed hopes in the flame-lit opals."

To Claxton Hall, where the hostess, Lady Elverton, possessed some priceless emeralds, fate brought Ernest Wilderson, now known as Ernest Reeves, and, as ill luck would have it, just at a time when jewel robberies are being committed in the neighbourhood. It plays him a scurvy trick also in making him catch the thief of Lady Elverton's emeralds red-handed, only to find in him "Jim, the Cracksman," whom he had known in the prison hospital, where a strange friendship had sprung up between the two men. Jim who tells him: "Jim could have had his decent public, and lived honest if you hadn't put yer nose in. I was

only on this lay for a last time—strite! There's a girl, and I hadn't a penny."

It was not in Ernest Reeves, known to Jim as "The Duke," to give this old friend up to justice, so he retains the jewels and lets Jim go, but is unable to replace the emeralds before their loss is discovered, and, combined with his former story, they are damning evidence against him.

But when the shadows are blackest they lift, and as we part with Ernest Reeves the future is irradiated for him with new promise. Let us hope it is fulfilled.

P. G. Y.

WINTER.

"It is not death, but plenitude of peace;
And the dim cloud that doth the world enfold
Hath less the characters of dark and cold
Than warmth and light asleep,
And correspondent breathing seems to keep
With the infant harvest, breathing soft below
Its eider coverlet of snow."

COVENTRY PATMORE.

COMING EVENTS.

January 14th.—Girls' Missionary Conference (C.E.Z.M.S.), Morley Hall, 26, George Street, Hanover Square, W. Nurses welcome. 11—1, and 2.30—4.30 p.m.

January 21st.—Nurses' Union "At Home," 5, Cambridge Gate, 2.30—7 p.m.

January 25th.—Meeting of the Central Registration Committee, Council Room, British Medical Association Office, 429, Strand, London, W.C., 3.30 p.m. The Right Hon. the Lord Ampthill will preside.

January 25th.—Matrons' Council of Great Britain and Ireland. Meeting of the Council, 7.30 p.m. Papers and discussion, 8 p.m. 431, Oxford Street, London, W.

January 26th.—Royal Infirmary, Edinburgh. Lecture on "The Blood, its Functions and Alterations," by Dr. G. Lovell Gulland. Extra Mural Medical Theatre, 4.30 p.m. Nurses are cordially invited.

January 27th.—Meeting of the Certified Midwives' Total Abstinence League, Chapter House, St. Paul's Churchyard, E.C. Lecture by Dr. Kelynaek on "Medical and Nursing Aspects of the Alcohol Problem," 3.30 p.m.

January 29th.—Meeting of the Executive Committee of the National Council of Nurses of Great Britain and Ireland. To form committees to further the Resolutions passed at the International Congress of Nurses, 431, Oxford Street, London, W., 4 p.m.

WORD FOR THE WEEK.

I believe that no one can harm us but ourselves; that sin is misdirected energy; that there is no devil but fear; and that the Universe is planned for good. I believe that work is a blessing, that winter is as necessary as summer, that night is as useful as day, that Death is a manifestation of Life, and just as good. I believe in the Now and Here. I believe in You and I believe in a Power that is in Ourselves that makes for Righteousness.

FRA ELBERTUS.

*By Dorothea Conyers. (Hutchinson and Co., Paternoster Row, E.C.)

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