

Women held its Congress in London in 1899, many of us had the pleasure of meeting Mrs. Willoughby Cummings, of Canada, the secretary of the Canadian National Council of Women.

King's College at Windsor, Nova Scotia, is the oldest university in the British Colonial Empire, and at the Convocation Ceremony last week, the honorary degree of Doctor of Civil Law was conferred on, among others, Mrs. Willoughby Cummings. Mrs. Cummings is the first woman upon whom the honorary degree of D.C.L. has been conferred. She is now employed by the Dominion Government to deliver lectures upon the Government's old-age pension system.

Mme. Curie and M. Debierne have just presented a joint memoir to the Academy of Sciences announcing that they have succeeded in isolating pure radium. The metallic radium which they have obtained is of a brilliant white colour, which blackens when exposed to the air. It burns paper, rapidly decomposes water, and adheres to iron.

Book of the Week.

VERITY LADS.*

To quote from the introduction, "This book is a packet made up of boy's letters. . . . The letters are like the needy knife grinder; for story, God bless you, they have none to tell, sirs—as stories told by writers go. They are all about a thousand things that seemed funny or vexatious to an irresponsible youngster."

They were written to his Uncle Donby, the outcast of the family. "It is the oddest thing in the world, that people think they know sufficient of a man to judge him, when they have heard just one plain thing about him. My Uncle Donby had been in jail, that was enough. . . . My uncle died at Christmas of pneumonia. . . . He, was delirious for a day and part of the night; and towards morning, he raised himself with his ordinary keen look of quiet pleasure, and pointed at the wooden floor.

"See!" said he, as if he had spied a secret out, "Tak one."

I asked him what I was to take.

"Wha', do you not see?" he smiled, dropping his eyes at me. "Snawdrops."

They were not due, alas, till he had been six weeks underground.

"Shall I gather a bunch for you?" said I.

"Nay," he answered, with his tone of gentle deprecation. "Nay, leave 'em, Harry. Aw m' be goin' home."

With that he lay back again and slept his last sleep.

It must not be supposed that much of the book is in this strain, for the confidences that Master Harry Verity makes to his uncle, leads to pious thanksgiving that he belonged to any other family

* By Keighley Snowden. (T. Werner Laurie, Clifford's Inn.)

than one's own. His misdemeanours appear to have come home to him when he was suffering from the mumps. "I had to take care they didn't meet under my chin, because Sally said if ever they slipped down and came together, I was as dead as a nit. Sally said if I put my feet in mustard and water and jumped into bed quick the mumps would sweat away. I was afraid of dying, because of not being saved. There is no end of things you can think of to repent, if you want badly to be forgiven. P'raps the angel misses out some, if a nipper doesn't rightly know what a sin is. I would. I expect, I ought to have sat with my class when we went to chapel, instead of going into the free seats with Bob, where the stove was, and roasting chestnuts with a hole cut in them, so they wouldn't crack out. But, of course, in the Bible there is nothing said about a thing like that . . . but I know I prayed about it.

Sally told my mother not to give me any medicine. She said, "Anybody that takes medicine, it eats their insides away, while at least there's nought but a shell; and if ever it gets at back of their heart into that cup where their heart is, and lift it out then they're done for. Especially black medicine that goes straight into the cup."

But as everyone knows, "When the devil was ill, the devil a saint would be," etc., and while the mumps were yet with him he went to visit Tom Hopkinson afflicted in the same manner. "We had a try to mend their clock. It never went anyway. I don't expect we did much harm to it." "We got sent away to Whittaker's farm, near Craggside, for a holiday, old Whittaker expected we should come to no good—so he made us go to church on Sunday. By rights, I expect we should have gone to chapel like we always did. Church is different. The parson had a long white gown on. He kept singing (rather miserable), and then they all sang whenever he stopped; but not very loud, because I don't think many knew what tune it was. The sermon was soon done, I didn't get to look at all the windows, but I enjoyed myself better than our chapel, that is, I would have if Bob had behaved. He told me it was Popery, and said don't take any notice."

If the "Verity Lads" does no more than provoke a smile, it is something in this sorry world.

H. H.

COMING EVENTS.

September 24th.—Meeting of the Inspectors of Midwives' Association. Midwives' Institute. 12, Buckingham Street, Strand, W.C. 2.30 p.m.

October 10th.—Territorial Force Nursing Service, City and County of London. Reception at the Mansion House by invitation of the Lady Mayoress and the Members of the Executive Committee. 8—10.30 p.m. Entertainment and music.

WORD FOR THE WEEK.

I wonder why we are not all kinder to each other than we are. How much the world needs it. How easily it is done.

HENRY DRUMMOND.

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