

machines worked by motor power, provided by the contractor who supplied the material out of which these women were making the underlinen that is sold in the big shops of Paris and France generally.\* Here were machines for embroidering, for buttonholing, for festooning—all on the latest principle, such as might be found in any of the big factories, which must have interested the women to work more than the monotonous plain stitching. The very noise of the machines is a relief to the prisoners after the silence of the dormitories, refectories and the exercising yard. The impression here was, therefore, not painful.

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"According to the French system prisoners can earn money by their work. Good workers can make tenpence a day, but only a certain share comes into their hands. A portion of these earnings is put aside by the authorities to be handed to the women on their release, but the greater part is spent by them in the purchase of sugar, coffee and a few apples, to vary the prison fare, which consists of vegetable soup poured over bread, and every other day a bowl of white beans, potatoes, or rice. One of the punishments for infringement of the prison rules that the women feel keenly is the temporary withdrawal of permission to buy at the canteen.

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"In the infirmary, at the close of my visit, I came upon a weird collection of criminals, some sitting up in bed, others standing disconsolately about the room. What had they done, these harmless-looking old women? 'They are nearly all here for life,' said the governor. 'The one nearest to you has killed five children. That one there was a servant who murdered her mistress.' 'And the majority of these here,' I asked, 'what has been their crime? What are they here for?' 'For killing their husbands!' came the answer."

As soon as women have political power they must make a tremendous assault upon the penal laws and prison system, and the Suffragists who have been behind the scenes will make a fine advance guard. Meanwhile, women who have time might join and help the fine work of the Penal Reform League, which is doing so much to interest the public in the right treatment of criminals, the office address of which is 1, Harrington Square, London, N.W.

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#### VERSE.

Through the rich man's window  
Joy passed one day;  
He passed the scholar's alcove  
Though bidden there to stay.

He brushed the cheek of beauty  
Then rested—foolish joy—  
Beneath the ragged jacket  
Of a little beggar boy.

—Mary F. Bates.

## BOOK OF THE WEEK.

### "THE ADJUSTMENT."\*

This book chronicles the doings of Christina, daughter of Rachel and Rudolph Massendon, whose marriage years before had caused consternation to Rachel's friends and well wishers. The consternation was justified by their separation just before the birth of Christina. Father and daughter meet in her first season, but it is some time before she learns that "Mr. Tennant" is her parent.

Christina is a serious girl, with a fund of self-will and self-reliance. Her mother leaves her on a two years' visit to America at the time when she most needed her, and Christina, as might be expected, throws herself away on an invalid man who is largely a crank, and who, incidentally, has undergone, some years previously, a term of imprisonment for forgery, mainly due to the bad influence of Christina's father. But somehow it all works out most suitably. She meets Desmond Stressborn for the first time in a furious blizzard on the sea shore.

"The tide rushed on in a foaming, swirling torrent over the level sands on her left and the rough path she tried to follow along the edge of the sand dunes became every moment more obliterated. Close at hand amongst the reeds she could see the roof of a hut, and decided to take rest and shelter there. She was for a moment too blinded with sand and too exhausted to speak or even to see, but she knew a man helped her to find a seat."

This is, of course, Desmond, and the description of the blizzard is one of the best things in the book. Her compulsory detention at the Castle during the storm, which lasts for some days, seals her fate; Desmond tells her his unfortunate history and owns his love for her.

"The whole horrible ugly tragedy seemed to rise up and drag from remote corners shadows that might lie in wait for a man's soul. She dared not look at him, but the slow tears gathered in her eyes and dropped one by one on her dress. And he did not look at her. He sat so still that she could bear it no longer, but sprang up and went over to him and put her hands on his shoulders—'Oh! if caring could help, how much I could do,' she cried in a shaking voice.

"His hands stole up and were clasped over hers. She felt them trembling.

"'I told you myself,' he said slowly, 'because I love you, and I could not bear that anyone else should do it.'"

The incident of her unpremeditated visit to this young man's home naturally gives rise to gossip, which her friends tactfully cover, so it is the more exasperating that she insists on returning to nurse him through an attack of rheumatic

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\* By Marguerite Bryant. William Heinemann, London.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)