

BOOK OF THE WEEK.

"SOME ELDERLY PEOPLE AND THEIR YOUNG FRIENDS."*

Miss Macnaughtan can always be relied on to provide her readers with sparkle and humour. This her latest production is just the sort of thing that is wanted at the present time. Anyone in search of a book for the holiday cannot do better than acquire this one.

Miss Crawley was a handsome wealthy maiden lady of forty. "She looked older because of the habit she had of wearing rich brocade dresses in the evening, and handsome winter furs. Tom Beamish was fifty and did not try to conceal his age, because it was written in cold print in the latter pages of the 'Peerage.' Mrs. Darling's two daughters were grown up, and were there to prove that their mother must be—of a certain age. Mr. Macpherson was one of those men who are dumb in society; he was asked out to dinner because he was scientific or because men are scarce. All the other persons in the book were much younger than these. And one was a mere chit. The youngest Miss Darling was clever, and the elder was very nearly engaged to a curate. The third girl was Tom Beamish's niece." The author in the above epitome has introduced them thoroughly. Besides which there was Tony Darling with his perpetual note of interrogation.

Says Mrs. Darling: "You must be a good boy now, Tony, and show what a little man you are by helping us to bear up."

"Why must I bear up, Mummy?"

"Oh, it's far braver to bear up, darling."

"When I'm a big man shall I bear up?"

"I hope so, dear."

"Does Mr. Beamish bear up, Mummy? Will Lord Eling bear up?"

"If I'm to keep my reason I must go," said Tom Beamish.

With the exception of the aforesaid Tony, all these delightful people, old and young, had their love affairs.

It was always understood by her circle; and certainly by Miss Crawley herself, that at some future indistinct date she and Tom Beamish would marry. Tom Beamish himself also seemed to accept his position, but at the time the story opens he had not got any further forward. The Fates intervened when for the first time he beheld Julia Crawley wearing her pince-nez. It was in church, and the peace of the Sabbath departed.

"I hope you will come in to lunch, Tom," said Miss Crawley meekly as they stood together on the doorstep.

"Thank ye," said Mr. Beamish, who persisted in this method of pronouncing the word because his father had always done so before him, "but I am expecting Willie Macpherson to lunch.

* By S. Macnaughtan. Smith, Elder & Co., London.

Julia," he said, coming half-way up the steps and speaking humbly, "don't wear them! For Heaven's sake, my dear girl, don't wear them! It's horrible. I can't bear it."

Clemmie, his niece, is a most delightful little person who conceives it her duty to become a militant suffragette. The sufferings of a little child in an insanitary cottage brought her to the point. Her interview with the local policeman in the middle of the night, when she is attempting to set fire to a shed is very amusing.

"I don't hold with women being out much o' nights, Miss Clemmie, especially ladies."

Clemmie proceeds to explain that even a Turk leads man to imagine that he has a profound sense of chivalry for all women.

"If you'll excuse my saying so," said Roberts, "I don't believe your papa would like you to use them words, Miss Clemmie."

In the end Tom Beamish turns his affections to Mrs. Darling, but Miss Crawley accepts it with courage, and takes Willie Macpherson instead.

The elder Miss Darling marries her curate, and naughty Clemmie was married to Bob Damer in the Guards Chapel. "To this day Bobby has very little recollection of it. He remembers lurking in the vestry for a long time with Newman Greaves, who told him to keep calm and not make an exhibition of himself, and that there was a tall clergyman with a great flat prayer book that alarmed him very much, and he knew there was a bishop with enormous sleeves, and a bunch of pale blue bridesmaids waiting at the door of the church, and that he himself was in a tight uniform, and wished he wasn't. . . . Then Clemmie came, and it was all right."

H. H.

THE SINGING OF THE CHILDREN FOR THEO.

Little Theo's gone away,
Gone away;
We shall never see her play,
See her play,
Here and there, the livelong day.

God in Heaven loves us all,
Loves us all;
Little Theo heard Him call,
Heard Him call,
And she let her playthings fall.

God in Heaven loved her so,
Loved her so;
Little Theo, will you go?
Will you go?
And she left us here below.

Very gently let us sing,
Let us sing;
Theo now remembering,
Remembering;
Loving more than anything.

MARY G. COLERIDGE

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