

hair." As the title of the book suggests, she plays a leading part. The "Head" of Melton is an inimitable character; it goes without saying that he was a scholar of repute, with gentle, sing-song voice, who habitually addressed his pupils in either classical or biblical language.

O'Rane, the fiery illegitimate and orphan son of Lord O'Rane, stands out remarkable among many remarkable people.

At the age of fifteen he appeared from nowhere and demanded admission to the charmed circle of Melton.

Mr. Burgess, the "Head," thus described the interview:—

"There came to me a laddie no bigger than a man's hand. 'Thy name and thy business, laddie?' He told me he was known to men as David O'Rane. His speech was as the speech of men in far places. Shortly he bade me 'See here,' and stated that he proposed to come to my old school anyway, and that was the way he regarded the proposition." All through his life that which David proposed to do he did. For instance, he did not propose to play football, and was caned by the monitors every ten days in consequence, and this was repeated every ten days till he passed into the Sixth, where football was not compulsory.

Gradually his dominant personality brought the school to his feet, and Lord Loring, the captain of his house, though he administered chastisement, passed from pitying him as a "lonely little devil," to admitting him to the charmed circle of himself and other kindred spirits. "You're not a bad fag, young man; I'm quite sorry you've passed into the Sixth."

"No more of our ten-day meetings," said O'Rane.

Loring half closed his eyes.

"Believe me or not," he said. "I have always regarded those meetings as blots on our delectable friendship. Are you going home for the holidays, Spitfire?"

"I haven't got a home," said O'Rane, with something of a return to his old sullenness.

How charming is the picture of the last days in the old school.

"My last chapel was Loring's first. Catholic or not, he felt the service was not to be missed. We sat side by side and determined there should be none of the foolish weakness exhibited by other generations of leaving monitors. Yet, as the organ began to play the last hymn, he failed to rise, and as voices all around me began to sing 'Lead, Kindly Light,' I found I could not join in."

Life at Oxford is as convincingly depicted. It was during that period that O'Rane made up his mind that he would marry Sonia, then a child of sixteen—but Lady Dainton thought otherwise.

David had, however, made up his mind and bided his time.

Sonia, in the meantime, goes through the various phases of a debutante in a certain set of smart society, prior to the war. Very loud, rather *risquée*, beautiful, attractive, striving with

her pushing mother after an unenviable notoriety. She engaged herself to Lord Loring, jilted him, and made herself notorious with men of shady reputation.

The political situation is discussed and criticised from all standpoints; the German influence in society and commerce is brought into prominence.

And in the midst of all this feverish atmosphere and unrest, comes the declaration of war.

Loring, the *dilettante* nobleman, Tom Dainton, and others of the old Meltonian circle, offer the supreme sacrifice, and fiery, brilliant O'Rane becomes totally blind.

But he said he would marry Sonia and he kept his word. In the awful tragedy of the war she found herself, and his helplessness conquered her where his dominance had failed.

O'Rane says: "I can still see visions, thank God."

We say, without fear of contradiction, that this work is a masterpiece. No one should allow it to be laid to their charge that they have failed, through any fault of their own, to read it.

H. H.

"WHEN WILL THE WAR BE BY?"

"This year, neist year, sometime, never,"

A lanely lass, bringing hame the kye.

Pu's at a floo'er wi' a weary sigh,

An' laich, laich, she is coontin' ever

"This year, neist year, sometime, never,

When will the war be by?"

"Weel, wounded, missin', deid,"

Is there nae news o' oor lads ava?

Are they hale an' fere that are hine awa'?

A lass raxed oot for the list, to read—

"Weel, wounded, missin', *deid*";

An' the war was by for twa.

From A Sough o' War. By Charles Murray.

WORD FOR THE WEEK.

Like the star

That shines afar,]

Without haste

And without rest,

Let each man wheel with steady sway

Round the task that rules the day,

And do his best.

COMING EVENTS.

May 14th.—Asylum Workers' Association, Annual General Meeting. The Mansion House, E.C. Chair, the Right Hon. the Lord Mayor. 5 p.m.

May 21st-25th.—Post Graduate Week for Midwives, General Lying-in Hospital, York Rd., Lambeth, S.E.

May 23rd.—Trained Women Nurses' Friendly Society. Annual Meeting. 431, Oxford Street, London, W., 4.30 p.m.

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