

BOOK OF THE WEEK.

"THE STARLIT GARDEN."*

When an attractive young man of twenty comes over from America to undertake the guardianship of a pretty heiress of still tenderer age, we may be sure that complications will arise. Though Richard Pinckney was young in years, he had the self assurance and wisdom of a far older man, and was altogether typical of his compatriots. His ward, Phyll, was an Irish girl, though her mother had been a Mascarene, a member of the old adventurous family that settled in Virginia when Virginia was a wilderness. Red hair had run among the Mascarenes—red hair and a wild spirit that brooked no contradiction and knew no fear. Phyll had inherited something of this restless daring spirit. She had run away from the Rottingdean Academy for the Daughters of the Nobility and Gentry where she had been sent at the age of twelve; making her way back to Ireland like a homing pigeon, she had turned up at breakfast time, quite unshaken by her experiences of travel and with the announcement that she did not like school.

Had her mother been alive, the traveller would have been returned; but Phyll's father, good man, was too much taken up with his agrarian pursuits, hunting and the affairs of country to bother much about the small affair of his daughter's education.

He died while he was on a visit to America, and in his extremity appointed young Richard Pinckney to look after his young daughter and her affairs.

Youthful though he was, Richard was a sound business man, and the casual management and reckless extravagance of Phyll's Irish home roused his business ire.

He made a tour of the premises without any loss of time.

"They left the kitchen and came into the yard. A big can of refuse was standing by the kitchen door, and on the top of all sorts of refuse lay the carcase of a boiled fowl."

Pinckney stared at this sinful sight. Then he pointed to it.

"What's that doing here?" he asked.

"Waitin' to be took away by the stable boy, sor; all the rubbish is took away in that old can every mornin'."

"Haven't you any poor people about here?"

"Hapes, sor."

Phyll was of opinion that "it is insulting to give poor people scraps just as if they were animals; lots of poor people come here every day, but they don't care for scraps, and besides we've done it for hundreds of years."

It was the same in the home farm.

"Who looks after all this?" asked Pinckney.

"I do, sor."

* By H. de Vere Stacpoole. (London: Hutchinson & Co.)

"What are the takings?"

"I beg pardon, sor."

"The profits I mean. You sell these things, I suppose?"

"Kilgobbin isn't a farm, sor; it's a gintlemin's estate."

This state of affairs led up to the estate being let, and Phyll went out to America to live with her young guardian, under the chaperonage of his old aunt.

Aunt Pinckney was something of a character, and Phyll soon settled in her new home.

A charm was added to her life in the romance of an antecedent who had lived in the house and whose rooms were kept as she had left them.

Phyll, full of imagination, would live the romance of the girl and her lover over again; she would steal out to the seat behind the magnolias where the dead girl had been wont to meet the man she loved, and her fancy persuaded her that she had lived before in Juliet.

It was not a far cry to the idea that Richard was that long-dead lover.

Of course, from the first the reader would foresee the end of the relationship of guardian and ward. We feel rather aggrieved that the happy climax is not reached till the last page.

Though the story is somewhat thin, it is quite interesting, and there are many charming local descriptions.

H. H.

COMING EVENTS.

October 29th.—Central Midwives Board for Scotland. Examination in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dundee and Aberdeen.

October 31st.—Nursing Missionary League. The Autumn Re-union. University Hall, Gordon Square, W.C. 10.15 a.m. and 2.30 p.m.

November 1st.—Central Midwives Board (England). Examinations in London, Birmingham, Bristol, Manchester and Newcastle-on-Tyne.

VERSE.

I heard the voice of Liberty . . . ;
Cry that splendid word of Death
(That we say beneath our breath)
In its whole divine intent;
And I knew the joy it meant,
Shared the joy that only they
Partake who give themselves away
To the freedom of the world.

From "A Non-Combatant,"
By HENRY BRYAN BINNS.

WORD FOR THE WEEK.

"It is for the body to rest as well as to toil. And it is for the mind to relax and change, as well as to concentrate. And it is for man to play, to rejoice with the hills, to throb with the sea, to laugh with nature, as well as to struggle and pile up victories. *But!* It is for the *Will* to slumber not, to relax never, to go forth day and night, in the full majesty of conquest."—*Haddock.*

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