

## LETTERS FROM LIFE.—No. 6.

Graithwaite.

DEAR PHYLLIS,—We are all deep in politics. We have received orders to bestir ourselves, and there are to be meetings and speechifyings galore through the winter. A General Election is in the air, and *entre nous*, is, I imagine, nearer than we are told to expect. But my humble opinion is that Lord Salisbury would do wisely to give women votes in Parliamentary elections, before he appeals to the country. It is sure to come, because it is only just, and whichever side gives women the suffrage, will get the mass of their votes, at any rate, in the first burst of gratitude. Were you not sorry to hear of Mr. Smith's death? How very typical of the lives of the two men, his death and funeral, and those of Mr. Parnell have been. The one wearing himself out in his country's service—seeking no reward, and in fact, as you know, declining to give up last Session and take a peerage, because his work was not done—passes peacefully away, and is laid to his long rest in a little country churchyard, without ostentation or display. The other, who reduced politics to a business, and did his best to reduce Parliamentary Government to a farce; who systematically worked for himself, and lived by exciting feverish unrest in others, dies of an excessive bodily temperature, and is given a public funeral by a high-spirited and generous people, who condone the injury he did to the cause he was pledged to support, in the belief that he loved and died for his country. I cannot think that Mr. Parnell will take a high place in history. Indeed, I have a strong impression that if Home Rule had been granted to Ireland, Mr. Parnell would have been one of the very first to take up his residence elsewhere, and so escape the Kilkenny Cat proceedings which would have inevitably begun, at once, and continued unto the historic end. Every one is asking what difference Mr. Parnell's death will make. I should not be surprised if it meant the death of Home Rule. The very last thing Irishmen outside gaols and lunatic asylums really want is to have Ireland all to themselves. They want English gold—a good deal—and a little English hysteria to prevent landlords claiming their rent. If the Home Rulers get out of hand, and they have no man to take Mr. Parnell's place, and keep them from fighting among themselves, the people will get a free chance, and Conservatives and Unionists would be returned for lots of seats.

MR. and MRS. GERMAN REED'S ENTERTAINMENT.—“Possession,” by Walter Browne, Music by Alfred J. Caldicott, followed by Mr. Corney Grain's latest Musical Sketch, entitled, “Dinners and Diners,” Monday, Wednesday, Friday, at Eight; Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday, at Three.—Stalls, 6s., 8s.; Admission, 2s. and 1s.—St. George's Hall, Langham Place.—“Killiecrumper” will be played next week.

Mr. Gladstone would doubtless declare that his open mind received the impression—not to be too dogmatic, and say, the conviction—that Ireland had changed her mind and did not require Home Rule; that far be it from an alien like himself to dictate to Ireland, but that it was borne in upon him that the Disestablishment of the Welsh Church must be taken in hand, forthwith, if the heavens were not to fall, and earth cry shame on English perfidy.

Mr. T. P. O'Connor has been writing a life of Mr. Parnell, which will be ready early next week, and will be published by Messrs. Ward, Lock and Co. at the popular price of a shilling. It ought to be interesting, and especially at this moment will doubtless be very widely read. I hear that Mr. O'Connor gives a detailed account of what was to many, until last year, a mystery—how Mr. Parnell made Captain O'Shea the Member of Parliament for Galway.

It seems that the proposal to start a “Writers' Club” in London has fallen rather flat. Whatever the reason may be, women do not seem able to co-operate successfully, unless associated with men who will manage the business part of the concern for them. So I fear the lady journalists will not be able to carry through more than an occasional dinner or tea party, and, for my part, I cannot see what they want with a special club of their own.

“By Order of the Czar” seems to be having a tremendous sale. If you have not read it, you should do so. I hear there is a new edition issued about once a fortnight, and that five thousand copies have been ordered by one London bookseller alone. Mr. Hatton has just finished writing a love story, called “The Princess Mazaroff,” which will be published soon. I am told that Mr. Gladstone has expressed his hope that “By Order of the Czar” “may have a good influence on the policy of Russia towards the Jews.”

What is, perhaps, the most curious and interesting literary combination of modern times has just been announced by the Editor of *The Gentlewoman*. It will be remembered that in the first twenty numbers of that journal there appeared week by week a “Novel” Novel, each chapter being by a different author—an amateur and reader of the journal. This very successful scheme suggested to the Editor the idea of a novel written by many well-known novelists without consultation or any plan being prearranged. The result has been a remarkable work of fiction and literary curiosity, called “The Fate of Fenella.” The opening chapter is by Helen Mathers, the

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