the most distinguished soldiers, with a notice of each, *little* required by the Royal memory. One without arms the Queen pensions and looks after, and is in despair because his friends help him to the brandy bottle which he is unable to handle for himself, and the results are sad! The Prince found he was incorrigible, but the Queen *knows* he has *now* taken the pledge, and "will not give him up." You can see the look with which that was said, and Miss N.'s earnest entreaty that he might *not* be given up in despair. . . . The servants were all in such a state to see her—Seabrook approves because she can laugh, and has no nonsense. She wear the Queen's brooch which her soldiers are so proud of, taking it as a *personal compliment* to each individual! . . . We asked how many times she went round at night. 'Three,' she said (sometimes there were 2,000 patients). 'Then when did she sleep?' 'Oh! that first winter we did not feel as if we needed much sleep.'"

In the Sick Room.

The quotes from the letters relating to the illness and death of the Prince Consort wring the heart even at this distance of time. "On entering the Queen's room," writes Lady Augusta, "it was a terrible moment, a life of anguish and agony was concentrated in it. Oh darling, what agony. It was terrible to witness it."

The death scene was even more poignant. "The poor Queen exclaimed, 'Oh yes, this is death. I know it. I have seen it before." The Queen fell upon him, called him by every endearing name; then sank into our arms and let us lead—or carry her away."

Once seated on the fountain in the Bart's. quadrangle—talking at 2 a.m. with Georgina Godolphin-Osborne, the then night-superintendent, on the subject of immortal love, she exclaimed, "Nothing—nothing has been more exquisite than the loves of Victoria and Albert."

The Letters of Lady Augusta Stanley bear testimony to this conviction.

Considerable interest has been aroused by the letter from the National Union of Societies for Equal Franchise, signed by many earnest women, appealing to the Government so to arrange the Parliamentary time-tables as to give a reasonable opportunity for legislation this year on the question of equal franchise for men and women. It is understood, however, says *The Times*, that it is not the present intention of the Government to introduce franchise legislation this year, though it is agreed that there is a pledge that it shall be dealt with during the life of the present Parliament.

It is clear that, if the voting age for women is to be reduced from 30 to 21, a great deal of preliminary consideration must be given to the position which will arise when the change has been made. It has been suggested that a conference of all the political parties presided over by the Speaker, should first enquire into the subject, but failing that, a committee of some kind will certainly be set up to make the preliminary investigations.

It is good news that there is on foot a movement to establish a fund for the preservation of ancient cottages and kindred buildings, such as barns, farm houses and mills. In the past 50 years many lovely landmarks in rural districts have been ruthlessly demolished. There was a six-sailed magnificent windmill in the Vale of Belvoir—not only a landmark, but a real friend to those who dwelt for miles around. Then one fine day in revisiting the district after years, we stood upon a hill and gazed and gazed. The grand old mill had vanished. We literally *had* to sink upon a heap of stones by the wayside and have a good cry. The Royal Society of Arts deserves practical support to the appeal it is making for this good work, in which the Prime Minister is warmly interested.

BOOK OF THE MONTH.

AN AMERICAN TRAGEDY.*

The title of this book is not belied by its contents, for a more tragical history of a young life it would be indeed hard to excel.

It is in fact a psychological and physiological analysis, terribly convincing, of a boy whose short life ended under the most terrible conditions in the early twenties.

Brief as was his career, it was packed with incident, and holds the half-repelled reader's attention throughout an unusually long volume, and forces him to the unwilling conclusion that the conditions of Society described therein are no mere flights of imagination.

Clyde Griffiths, when he first appears on the stage, was a schoolboy of twelve years, the son of an itinerant preacher and his wife, earnest and sincere, but who were, perforce, compelled also to regard their calling commercially.

Clyde was not the only child, but he was of an age to feel acutely that his parents were not as the parents of other lads. That they were essentially single-minded and good did not weigh in the boy's mind against their unusualness.

"What does father always want to go around saying, 'Praise the Lord' for? Other people don't do it!"

"The combination home and mission which this family occupied was dreary enough in most of its phases to discourage the average boy and girl of any spirit."

Clyde's casual examination of himself in mirrors tended to assure him that he was not bad looking.

He told himself that, "if only he had a better collar, a nicer shirt, finer shoes, a swell overcoat like some boys had."

That "if only" proved to be his final undoing. His young sister Esta's disappearance to a more exciting, if less virtuous existence, finally determined him to strike out for himself.

Very soon in his independent life he became vaguely aware of sex lure.

In his humble occupation of working in a drug store he came in contact with bevies of girls who sat at the counter and giggled and chattered. Claude, callow and inexperienced, was never weary of watching them. The wonder of them! For the most part they were so well dressed and smart looking—such delightful hats, such pretty shoes they wore. He often overheard them discussing parties, dinners, shows. And to this day in his own home he had heard nothing of all this. Then he was now sixteen and ought to be getting something better.

His appointment as "bell-hop" in a smart hotel was the realisation of some of his dreams.

Humble though his position was he lived in the world of luxury for which he had so often sighed.

His pay was good, his tips lavish, and his ideas rose with his improved circumstances. The depravity of his fellow "bell-hops" was not long in communicating itself to him, and ended finally in his being mixed up with a most discreditable escapade which made it advisable, if not necessary, to disappear from his home and occupation.

In considering this part of the tragedy, which is sordid in the extreme, one is forced to the conclusion that, with his temperament, it was well nigh impossible for him to escape the contamination of such surroundings.

His selfish and self-centredness were the worst traits in his character, as was early shown by his determination to keep the whole of his improved circumstances for his own benefit, and the concealment from his harassed mother of the liberal amount that he earned.

His mother, though perhaps mistaken in submerging her family to her religious fervour, was really a fine character, as shown in the conclusion of the book.

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* By Theodore Dreiser. (Constable.)

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