

the Luttrell Psalter, and also the Bedford Book of Hours, have been secured for the nation. Both books will continue to be on public view in the Grenville Library of the British Museum until September when the temporary exhibition of English Illuminated MSS. closes.

BOOK OF THE MONTH.

"MATTERS THAT MATTER." *

Dame Henrietta Barnett, D.B.E., has crowded into her long life a wonderful amount of philanthropic work. She has realised the need of it through living among the poor, and her latest book, "Matters that Matter," tells the tale of schemes on original lines, carefully planned, heroically striven for against all discouragements and carried through to triumphant usefulness. "As we visualise ideals they will become more and more real, and so more insistent."

She tells us in her Foreword why she will not write her reminiscences: "For forty years, 1873-1913, I spent my life with Canon Barnett, and in writing his biography I had perforce to chronicle much in which I was concerned. . . . On all matters we consulted and moulded each other's opinions or enlarged our respective outlooks. These subjects were not strictly parochial, for we both had organising capacities. . . ."

"I have all my life felt honoured by the close co-operation between my husband and myself, and have no wish to disentangle it now, and, as I had to tell of these activities in his 'Life' it is neither possible nor desirable for me to write my biography."

She gave into the hands of Mrs. Lang hundreds of articles, speeches and "talks," and some of these, selected and edited, form the collection in "Matters that Matter." Housing, care of children, education, have been the outstanding interests of her life.

One address tells of the foundation of Toynbee Hall, the famous pioneer settlement. "In 1873 when my husband and I married and went to live in Whitechapel, many public-spirited men and women gathered round us and became our fellow-workers, so many that our small vicarage could not meet the needs of hospitality, and when Oxford and Cambridge sent their young men to help us we built Toynbee Hall to accommodate them. Situated as it is at the very gate of East London, the big reception rooms became the meeting-place of thinkers and workers, of rich and poor, of old and young, of the learned and ignorant, a veritable 'gathering place of souls' from which many and deep friendships arose." The district was a terrible one. "The whole place was inhabited by the criminal, the vicious, the degraded. . . . We set to work on two principles.

"To share our best possessions, be they art, music, literature, thought, knowledge, friends, happiness, beauty, ideals, hope. To share, not stand on a platform and shower down, but to stand on the floor and share, shoulder to shoulder—that was the first principle, and the second is like unto it 'to create friendship.'"

This gives the keynote of all Dame Henrietta's work.

The system of settlements was taken up on a large scale in America, and Mrs. Barnett went there as President of the Federation of Settlements. We are given several articles and speeches showing her deep interest in American character and work, with criticism both of them and of ourselves.

Toynbee Hall and its numerous activities led to the great pioneer housing scheme of the Hampstead Garden Suburb.

"If," I said one day to Canon Barnett, "we could buy

*John Murray, Albemarle Street, W. 7/6 net.

a huge estate and build so that all classes could live in neighbourliness together, the friendships would come about quite naturally, and the artificial efforts to build bridges need not be made." Thus was the Garden Suburb conceived.

The scheme, carefully thought out in every detail, has steadily developed as originally planned. Here "10,000 people of many social classes dwell in neighbourliness, paying rent from 4s. 6d. a week to £400 a year, and becoming acquainted by sharing the common interests of gardening, discussing current events, and enjoying music, pageants and art interests together." Houses and cottages, with ample ground for recreation, are grouped round a central Institute. This was designed by Sir E. Lutyens and is used for the education of all, kindergarden, schools, lectures, etc. A further extension of this was opened only the other day by Her Majesty the Queen, who has always taken the greatest interest in the scheme.

Beauty is sought throughout. "The effect of everyone's home is lasting, and for it to be ugly has a lowering effect on self-respect, and saps wholesome ambition."

The work Dame Henrietta has done for children would be for most a lifework in itself. After many years' work as school manager and on a committee of inquiry into the subject of Poor Law conditions she founded the State Children's Aid Association in 1897, "to urge upon Guardians of the Poor, and all those who deal with large numbers of children, that they should consider each child as an individual, and study its habits, tastes, characteristics and antecedents, with a view to placing it in the surroundings best suited to the development of its individuality." She says elsewhere that which "exists to awaken the conscience of the nation to the needs of State-dependent children." It still does great work, as also the Children's Country Holiday Fund, founded in 1876 by Canon and Mrs. Barnett. They had no children themselves, but great sympathy with and "loving knowledge of the children of the poor." Many of the articles deal with children's upbringing, education, health and enjoyment.

Work among women does not take so much space in the book though, as Dame Henrietta naively remarks: "I love women far more than men. I admire them more and I like the look of them better."

There are articles on holidays for families, for teachers, and impressions of travel in France and further afield. "Holidays both for ourselves and other people have always taken a large place in the philosophy of our conduct."

Dame Henrietta says also, "I am not prone to talk piously, feeling 'too reverential' to be religious," but a few sermons and articles on ethics conclude the book.

One closes it regretfully, a vivid personality before our minds, instinct with life and energy, overflowing with sympathy for the helpless, the poor and downtrodden, with a wonderful creative and organising capacity, a visionary with practical genius for giving substance to her dreams, and withal an unflinching sense of humour. Her life at over eighty is as full as ever. As Mr. Northcote says: "She has never failed to hitch her wagon to a star, only she has not been content with one wagon or one star."

Her text for an address describes her own attitude to life.

"I looked beyond the world for truth and beauty,

Sought, found and did my duty."

K. M. L.

COMING EVENTS.

September 20th.—The British College of Nurses' Council Meeting, 39, Portland Place, London, W.1, 2.15 p.m.

September 26th.—General Nursing Council for England and Wales. Monthly Meeting, 20, Portland Place, London, W.1, 2.30 p.m.

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