

Perhaps not, but the £50 from the North-West Land Company is only a loan, and Mr. — has, therefore, to mortgage all his goods and chattels and the N.-W. L. C. entertains serious hopes of reimbursement.

The neighbour's house was a decided improvement on the first homestead, and the neighbour's wife and children were as blooming as one could wish. We alighted without hesitation, and entered a sort of living-room, quite cheery to behold. An enormous patch-work covered bed stood in one corner, a table and chairs in the middle, while a flattering tribute was paid the *Illustrated London News* in its employment as wall-paper for the entire apartment. Another object, especially worthy of mention, was some framed cardboard on which were worked lines of adieu, composed by the neighbour's sister when she left him for Australia. This ornament seemed the only one that survived the melancholy sale of personal effects before the emigrants left London, for a very strict rule prohibited their taking any household god across the sea. Poor Mrs. Neighbour deplored quite pathetically her having to leave behind "every bit o' china, and the like, that would 'ave given this 'ere place such a 'ome look."

The neighbour's wife had, of course, the British matron's share of complaints:—

"Me 'usband is that bad with the indigestion, I sometimes think 'ee won't last the winter. Yes, I was wantin' to buy a pony this 'ear, but the frost has done sich harm I don't know how we're to manage it."

"But, come," said our cicerone, "you know, Mrs. —, that as for the frozen crops you won't really have to suffer. See here, unfrozen grain will fetch far more this year than last, and the frozen will sell nothing below the ordinary price."

Mrs. Neighbour, however, is inconsolable. These people are all the same, we are told. The poor, dark, shrivelled-up wheat can be called nothing but a calamity, even though you should pay its value ten times over. But, after all, I don't know exactly what the farmer would do without his stock of calamities.

The third and last East Londoner we visited was a widow, a deft-fingered creature, whose children, in clean, blue blouses, did her credit, but one of those painfully comfortless beings, super-sensitive to slights and the destitution of her situation. However, despite a certain chronic uncertainty about the eyelids, and woeful down turning of the mouth- corners, she promised well, very well, aided by a strapping son of fourteen, who managed the farm most creditably.

Out of the twelve successful farmers we had seen three typical ones. Five East Londoners abandoned the soil for trade, and the remaining three proved failures. From these facts and the sketch I have given you, England's surplus population must certainly seem as unwelcome here as it is at home. In my next I hope to give some account of the ideal farmer—the Scotchman from Ontario, whose horizon is bounded by his acres, and whose wife has that cool, fresh, heartlessly healthy look about her that only a life-long intimacy with butter and eggs can produce.

"THE SILENCE OF DEAN MAITLAND."

SUCH is the curious title of a novel, exciting curiosity which is gratified on reading it. It is a work that has made its mark. Artificially constructed, with little originality except in the character of the Dean, packed with coincidences, not wanting in improbabilities, it has the supreme merit of riveting one's interest. The situations are very strong, making heavy demands on the author, who is equal to their weight. The story may be told in brief. Cyril Maitland, a young clergyman, meets by appointment in a secluded spot, a very handsome young girl of station beneath his own, Alma Lee. He brings with him a sum of money to provide for her immediate pressing necessities, for which he is accountable. It is the old story. Her father, who has discovered their intention, breaks upon them and orders Alma off. An encounter takes place, and Maitland delivers a blow which kills Lee on the spot. He rushes away and, seeing Alma, cries out, "Oh! Alma, Alma, save me, save me! You know I never meant it!" The body of poor Lee, a respectable, inoffensive man, without known enemies, is found, not rifled of his watch or money, with the remarkable addition that a bag containing fifty pounds in gold, trampled under foot, lies near. Natural wonderment ensues. A disastrous combination of facts, events and mistakes in identity throws suspicion on Henry Everard, a young doctor, a very close intimate friend of Maitland and an inmate of the same house with him at the time. A very strong chain of circumstantial evidence is worked up against him. The usual proceedings follow, and he is committed for trial. Here Alma Lee, who for very sufficient reasons has not previously appeared is called as a principal witness. She looks very beautiful and is very defiant in demeanour, all the more, no doubt, that there are "a few ladies of lovely feature and rich attire in court." The belief is universal that Everard is the father of her child, and this makes a situation of great interest for the spectators. Alma gives her evidence with great reluctance, but, of course, it is dragged from her, and this monster in petticoats swears that the double guilt rests on the head of the prisoner at the bar, an innocent man, her friend and benefactor—and hence one chief source of suspicion—to whom she is under great obligations and who has never wronged her in word or deed. If this is true to human nature, such are the lengths to which the desire to screen the man she loves, however unworthy of even her, will drive a woman. This settles the matter. There is no more to be done or said. Everard is convicted of manslaughter and sentenced, after an address by the judge of great severity, to the heaviest penalty the law permits, twenty years penal servitude. Frightful fate! By this time he is perfectly certain that Cyril

is the true culprit, but he has no proof, he is condemned and helpless. Maitland looks on. Horrible as is the alternative presented to him, his dastard and craven soul shrinks from the ordeal, and from this hour dates "The Silence of Dean Maitland." To do him common justice, the struggle is intense and terrible, and he sinks under it into serious illness. He carries about with him the haggard, scared look of a haunted man. But, hypocrisy of hypocrisies, he salves his torn and bleeding conscience with the assurance (and he has great powers) of the benefit that his sacred calling shall confer on his fellow creatures, "I would have atoned," he murmured, "I would have atoned at any price, but it was not possible, the wrong is irreparable. Take Thou the will and the broken heart of contrition." What does the reader think of that? For our own part, we cannot set it down without repugnance. Well may men pray not to be led into temptation, lest the strongest and best of them fall in such a conflict. Meanwhile the wretched Everard serves out his term except being granted a ticket of leave for the last two years. He has escaped, been retaken, and has worn irons. He comes out from Portland prison an utterly broken man, to find Maitland become a shining light in the church, an extraordinarily fine preacher, a dean and bishop-elect—if there be such a dignity—courted by the great, now a widower looking to a marriage in high life, and "commanded" to dine with the Queen. But the writing on the wall has been traced; his time is come. Everard is present in the cathedral where Dean Maitland is holding forth to a vast congregation spell-bound by his eloquence. Everard has chosen his place behind a column, but, entranced like the rest, he involuntarily leans forward, brings his face into strong light, the eyes of the two men meet, with instant recognition, and they are once more face to face. The Dean abruptly ceased speaking. "I am not well," he said, and sat down. Alma reappears with her son and his, who presents himself to his father and demands his paternal acknowledgment. Alma is dying; she sends for Maitland, but he lingers in complying with her summons; she makes a death-bed confession, and dies. Last of all, the last stroke that makes a reality of his "contrition" and his broken "heart," Everard writes him a letter calling him "Dear Cyril," and giving him "full and free forgiveness." He makes public confession of all from the pulpit in the cathedral, but that puts on him a greater strain than he has any strength left for, a sudden stroke seizes him and he drops dead. That he had been a consummate actor and hypocrite need not be said, but though bad he was not all bad, perpetual remorse had been gnawing at his heart; "I shall be happier," he said to his last hearers, "in a felon's cell than I have ever been in the highest moments of my prosperity." To Henry Everard the reader's whole heart goes out from beginning to end; he is a very fine fellow; but all hope of active life or distinction in his profession has been crushed out of him. What happiness he can any longer enjoy falls to his lot; he marries the girl to whom he was engaged before his long imprisonment, and who, with true feminine fidelity, has never doubted him, and in her dear company he passes what should not have been but was the evening of his life.

The book is not without defects. The chorus of rustics reminds one of Mr. Hardy to its great disadvantage. To attain to anything like his raciness, even with "grandpa" and all, was hopeless.

There are the common blunders in legal procedure. The judge is made to ask Everard what he has to say *after* sentence has been pronounced. The clue of the bag of gold, if properly followed up, as it inevitably would have been, would have given an entirely new complexion to the case, and must have brought the guilt home to Maitland. He had changed more than one cheque for gold, and had drawn other sovereigns at the local bank in the very town where the examination before the magistrate occurred, and this was matter of common conversation in a public inn-parlour, an articulated clerk of the solicitor who was entrusted with the management of Everard's defence joining in it. All this *must* have come under the notice of his legal adviser. A farther insight into Maitland's character is obtained from the fact that at least two of the cheques were given to him for charity purposes in the parish, and on this very plea he induced the tradesmen who changed them to give him each an extra coin, and this money he was gathering together to, so to speak, pay off his paramour. And more yet. He afterward asked his sister to "lend him a couple of sovereigns." In answer to which she coolly says, "Why, you extravagant boy! Have you spent all that we gave you for your parish?" "Cyril shrugged his shoulders, 'You know the fellow of old, Lill, and how he scatters his coins. Only three guineas, all told, you know.' One really wonders whether such things can be written seriously. It is devoutly to be hoped that a clergyman like Cyril Maitland, Dean of Delminster and "bishop-elect," is a very *rara avis* indeed in the Anglican or any other Church. There are some nice women as a set-off to Alma Lee. There are a few little spiteful touches against men, which savour of an authoress, but they are only a few. The question of sex in the writer may perhaps be a moot point. The scene is Hampshire. Delminster is Winchester. Bishop Oliver is a full length portrait of the late Bishop Wilberforce and a very good likeness.

D. FOWLER.

A GOOD story is told of an order seeker—one of "the pestilential nuisances who sigh for autographs," when the autographs are those of acting-managers. It was at some Dublin sports that this particular one met with Mr. J. F. Warden, and, on the slightest acquaintance, dunned him for a free pass for the theatre. Pretending not to have a card, Mr. Warden wrote an order on the shirt-front of the victim, and told him to show it to the box-keeper and it would be all right. But the box-keeper had received his instructions, and, when the individual presented himself and asked for admission, the official said politely, "Certainly, sir; but you must give up the order!" Tableau!