

tion of the reader, and renders him unwilling to lay down the book until he has reached the epilogue.

Lady Cecil Chudleigh is the central female character. Elegant and accomplished, there were few more interesting faces than hers to be seen in the "Lady's Mile." "It was a pale face—pale, with no muddled sickly whiteness, or bilious yellow, but that beautiful pallor which is so rare a charm, a pensive, patrician face, with a slender aquiline nose, and dark hazel eyes." Lady Cecil was the orphan daughter of Lord Aspendell, who had been ruined by his own extravagance, and the wild follies of his son. Upon the death of her father she had been received into the home of an aunt—Mrs. McClaverhouse—and adopted as a "companion, reader, amanuensis and prop and comfort of her declining years." Mrs. McClaverhouse was the widow of an Anglo-Indian General, who had left her little beyond his pension, and a houseful of Indian shawls and Trichinopoly jewelry. She managed however to retain a good position in society, and although in the main a kind-hearted woman, Lady Cecil's position was not at all an enviable one. Mrs. Mac was afflicted with a chronic suspicion of the honesty of her servants, and to Lady Cecil was confided the task of counting the glasses and the spoons, battling with the tradesmen and the general oversight of the servants.

At the opening of the story Lady Cecil had been living with her aunt for three years, and in all those three years there had been only one break in the drudgery of her life—only one glimpse of sunshine; out that had been as "a revelation of Paradise." In the second autumn of Lady Cecil's dependence the dowager and niece had retired to a pretty seaside village; whilst there, a nephew of Mrs. McClaverhouse's returned suddenly from India. He was "tall and grand, and fair: the very type of a classic hero. . . . The freshness and brightness of an unsullied youth pervaded every tone of his voice, every thought of his mind, every ringing note of his genial laugh—so hearty, without loudness—so exuberant, without vulgarity." He was moreover an admirer of Victor Hugo's verses, and could read Tennyson charmingly. Many pleasant days were spent in the quiet village, and the cousins insensibly learned to love each other. But there was an obstacle in the way: Hector Gordon, when hunting in India, had been rescued from an enraged tiger by a friend, who carried him to his own house in Calcutta. He had been nursed through a long illness by his friend's sister, and grateful for her tender care, left his friend's house engaged to his gentle nurse. When Hector could no longer doubt the nature of his feelings towards Lady Cecil he indirectly made known to her the circumstance of his engagement, and left her to determine which he should sacrifice—his love to her, or his duty to his betrothed. "Should he write to her, confess the truth, trusting in her generosity to set him free? I am sure she would do so."

"There was a brief pause before Cecil said—
"I am sure of it, too, though I do not know her. But do you think she would ever be happy again?"

"I cannot answer for that. Ah, Lady Cecil, I know what you think my friend's duty is."
"There can be no question about it. He must keep his promise," she answered, firmly.
"Even if in so doing he forfeits the happiness of his future life, if in so doing he ties himself for ever and ever to the dull wheel of duty; even if he dares to think that his love is not altogether unreturned by her he loves so truly and so hopelessly? Ah, Lady Cecil, be merciful! Remember it is the fate of a lifetime you are deciding."

"I cannot advise your friend to be false to his word," replied Cecil. "I am sorry for your friend's sorrow. But it is a noble thing to do one's duty. I think he will be happier in the end if he keeps his promise."

"She looked up at him with a bright, brave glance as she spoke. Their eyes met, and her face changed, in spite of the heroic effort she made to preserve its exalted tranquillity."

"Cecil, I am going back to India, to do my

duty, with God's help. Say, God bless you, Hector, and good-bye."

"God bless you, Hector and—"

She looked up at the perfect face, the dark blue eyes, so dim with tears, and could not finish the sentence. She turned from her companion with a passionate gesture, ashamed of her own weakness, and walked homewards rapidly, with Hector walking silently by her side."

Hector Gordon sailed for India, and married his gentle nurse. Lady Cecil returned to her life of dependence and drudgery, bearing with her ever the memory of her lost love, but never regretting the heroic sacrifice she had made. Our space will not permit us to follow the plot of the novel, and we must content ourselves with intimating that although Lady Cecil subsequently married a Mr. Lawrence O. Boyneville, a talented Irish barrister—who is a fine type of the clever noble hearted Irishman, and, by-the-bye, one of the most skilfully drawn characters in the book,—her love to Hector Gordon (who re-appeared upon the scene after the death of his wife) brought her into a great peril from which she was only rescued when trembling upon the brink of ruin.

Although we have said we consider Lady Cecil the central female character, Florence Crawford, the daughter of an eminent painter, divides with her the interest of the story. She is the heroine of a drama of only secondary importance; but we must refer our readers to the work itself for the history of what she did and suffered.

One word as to the title of the work. Some of our readers may not be aware that it is derived from the fashionable drive which extends from Hyde Park Corner to the Serpentine, in which the aristocracy of Great Britain are accustomed to disport themselves for an hour or two each day, during the London season.

We have much pleasure in stating that arrangements have been completed, by which the Musical Department of the READER has been placed under the charge of a gentleman, who stands, confessedly, at the head of his profession in Montreal; and who is, we may add, a member of the most prominent musical family in the Province. We hope, in future, to devote a column in each issue to musical items, and to give a page of music at least once a month. We feel that some apology is due for apparent neglect of a long-standing promise, but are convinced that the arrangements now completed will give universal satisfaction to our friends.

THE MAGAZINES.

We have received from Messrs Dawson Bros. the following Magazines for May:

Fraser's.—The opening article is "On Prayer in Connection with certain Public Calamities." The writer disavows any sympathy with the opinions of modern sceptics, yet doubts whether God "interferes with natural law in the ordinary course of his Providence." The argument, although not very conclusive, is ably conducted. "A Chapter on Clerical Song-writers of the North," is a pleasant gossiping paper on the lyrical compositions of Scotchmen. There are two articles on military matters.—"The English Troops in the East," and "How are European Armies Officered?" Sir Edmund Head contributes a northern ballad, "The Death of old King Gorm." An Essay on "Salons" is replete with anecdotes, and very amusing. "Forest Life," is an interesting tale of the new Forest. "The Beauclercs, Father and Son," is continued.

The Dublin University.—The May number contains several of those curious antiquarian essays for which this magazine is famous. Three serial tales are continued. "Dreams, Omens and Predictions," "Cowardice and Courage," and an article on "The Reform Bill of 1866," complete the number.

In *Temple Bar*, the real Casual concludes his narrative, and his summing up of vagrant life is to the effect that "begging is a very poor substitute for work." "Lady Adelaide's Oath," by the author of East Lynne, promises to be a very powerful and interesting tale. Chapters four to six are given. "Archie Lovel" is continued;

among the other papers we notice "Fuss and Feathers," "Only Too True," an Italian story: "A Quaker Pepsy," and "Modern Eccentricities."

THE CHURCH OF OLD ENGLAND.—The second number of this new monthly is to hand and appears to us a considerable improvement upon the first issue. Among the contributed articles we notice a paper on Ritualism, based on a sermon preached by the Rev. George Whitaker, Provost of Trinity College. If we mistake not the views enunciated by the Provost are far less extreme than those generally attributed to him. There is also an interesting article on "Woman's Influence." The Editor invites communications on the subjects of Education and Temperance, as well as Church matters generally.

MUSICAL NOTES.

Is England a musical nation? There is of course but one answer to be made to this question. Nowhere are artists better received or letter paid than in England; but has England, in addition to her vast patronage of the art, at anytime fostered it in any peculiar branch? We constantly hear music spoken of as belonging to the French school, German or Italian—for Italy, with her lovely skies and luscious fruits and picturesque scenery, the land of lovely passions, has pictured them all in her music;—France has portrayed her martial character in her national songs and operas; while Germany, studious and contemplative, has outshone all in contrapuntal excellencies and fugal theories. But where is England? Has she no composers who have added to the noble structure? Cannot the English madrigal, the English ballad, the Church anthem, and its subsequent development into the Oratorio, be considered worthy of acknowledgment as a separate school of music? In the above mentioned schools we have the passions, the feelings and the mind all represented; but for home—the social fireside—and religion pervading the every-day life, we must look to England, with her home ballads and madrigals, and oratorios and anthems. These works possess a marked and distinct character, contrasting with the more readily acknowledged schools above referred to; and the names of Orlando Gibbons, Tallis, Purcell, Farrant, Morely, and many others, will ever be revered by the true musician. It is true they wrote principally for the church, but here is the stronghold. They wrote not only as musicians, but as men actuated by the purest and holiest of feelings; and rather than meet with the slightest secular tendency in their sacred works, many of the ballads, and especially madrigals, will be found to possess much of the deep-toned piety of the sacred compositions. It might be, perhaps, felt that the writer is anxious to see the works of these fine old musicians held up as the models of what Church music ought to be. Without entering into farther detail at present, it will only be necessary to remark that during the last two centuries music boasts of her finest musicians who have advanced the art to the highest pitch it has ever reached—we cannot, as in painting and architecture, look back upon a more enlightened period than our own; and the church should be the first to secure all that is soul-stirring and ennobling in the advancement of the art.

Madame Clara Schermann, the renowned pianist, who had accepted an engagement to re-appear before a London audience, at one of the philharmonic concerts of the present season, has now abandoned the idea—much to the disappointment of the musical public. It is stated a severe indisposition is the cause of her present decision.

Herr Joachim has left London for Hanover, having just concluded his engagement at the Monday popular concerts. The following paragraph from the "Musical World" shows the estimation in which that celebrated violinist is held:

"If ever there was a practical player, it is Joachim; if ever there was a poetical player, it is Joachim; and if ever there was a player to whom, all devices of mechanism are as familiar as ordinary speech, it is Joachim."