whether it requires for its comfort active service or the mystical life of contemplation. We see how every want is understood and how for every spiritual problem an answer is provided; how the experience of twenty centuries has been stored up and recorded, and how all that man has ever known is known to those who guide and perpetuate this mighty system. And in these days when Doctors of Divinity devote their energies to nibbling away the foundations of historic faith, and when the sharpest weapons of agnosticism are forged on theological anvils, there is something reassuring in the contemplation of the one great Church that does not change from age to age, that stands unshaken on the rock of its convictions, and that speaks to the wavering and troubled soul in the serene and lofty accents of divine authority.

H. T. Peck.

MRS. WARD AND "THE NEW WOMAN."*

The artist of an historical picture has one advantage over him who paints watermelons, grapes, and wineglasses half replenished; he can choose a larger canvas, and crowd it with figures to an extent only limited by the story he has to tell and his power of telling it. In *Sir George Tressady* Mrs. Ward has chosen to paint for us the history which to-day is in process of making; and though the book contains not a single character avowedly real, the picture of this strange, complex, confused time of ours is very accurately drawn, and the author's purpose of helping at least some of us to understand it and ourselves before it passes away is completely attained. But it is not unimportant, in studying a battle-piece, to know from what point of view the artist beheld it; as to which Mrs. Ward does not leave us in doubt. In speaking of Lord Maxwell, she says:

"The vast extension of the human will and power which science has brought to humanity during the last hundred years was always present to him as food for a natural exultation—a kind of pledge of the boundless prospects of the race. On the other hand, the struggle of society brought face to face with this huge increment of the individual power, forced to deal with it for its own higher and mysterious ends, to moralise and socialise it lest it should destroy itself and the State together; the slow steps by which the modern community has succeeded in asserting itself against the individual, in protecting the weak from his weakness, the poor from his poverty, in defending the woman and the child from the fierce claims of capital, in forcing upon trade after trade the axiom that no man can lawfully build his wealth upon the exhaustion and degradation of his fellow—these things stirred in him the far deeper enthusiasms of the moral nature. Nay more! Together with all the other main facts which mark the long travail of man's ethical and social life, they were among the only 'evidences' of religion a critical mind allowed itself—the most striking signs of something 'greater than we know' working among the dust and ugliness of our common day."

The passage is rather long, but as it supplies the key to the story, no apology is required for its quotation. The stage at which our author shows us this "long struggle" is the fight over a bill introduced into Parliament by Lord Maxwell, dealing with certain sanitary reforms in certain trades, and in especial "touching the grown man for the first time;" and our first introduction to the hero is as the successful candidate for Market Malford, a borough which has lately fallen vacant, and for which he has stood, distinctly on the issue of opposing the Maxwell Bill.

The strength of hand with which the main lines of the picture are drawn is something wonderful, and the colouring is masterly; nowhere is there a hasty or ill-considered stroke, or a tint too deep. It is true that many of the characters are types rather than "folks." Mrs. Allison, for example, with her piety and priestcraft; and her son, who, in the revulsion from all that which he has been reared in, has gone over to deliberate vice, always dramatic and unreal, are logical and philosophical, but in some way do not appeal to one's nerves with the sense of a living presence. In fact, whether because such keen analysis as Mrs. Ward's is opposed to a lively faith in the reality of her personages on her own part, or because "we others" do not go about armed with psychological Crookes' tubes whence to direct X-rays upon the hearts or, at any rate, the skeletons of our neighbours, certain it is that Mrs. Ward lacks the final supreme gift of making her characters step down from their pedestals and live with us. Ian Maclaren has not one tenth her technique; yet Weelum MacLure and Jamie Soutar are our personal friends in a sense that we should never claim for Marcella or George Tressady. But criti-

* Sir George Tressady. By Mrs Humphry Ward. New York: The Macmillan Co. 2 vols. $2.00.

cism is ungracious ; and we would rather praise.

No picture of our own times would be complete that did not consider the marriage question and its correlative, the development of "the new woman." The first of these Mrs. Ward treats by presenting us with two contrasted marriages—the ideal union of Lord and Lady Maxwell and the conventional, commonplace "match" of George and Letty Tressady. And just here we must pause for a moment to "taste" the combined good art and good breeding with which Mrs. Ward, refusing to take for granted that all the world has read *Marcella*, gives a *résumé* of the courtship of her by Aldous Raeburn, and in so doing furnishes the only instance with which we are acquainted of a perfect sequel which is, at the same time, a perfectly independent and complete *opus*. "Letty" is a wonderfully fine bit of work, with her deliberate wish to make the most of her attractions, much as might be done by a clever Circassian slave, her dawning love for her husband, and finally, with the rise of the maternal hope in her own heart, her softening toward Lady Tressady. The marriage turns out as one might have expected when the man has got precisely what he supposed himself to want, and the woman has failed in getting what she bargained for ; but the author shows us Letty, in her wounded love, anger, and vanity, "held tortured and struggling all the time in the first grip of that masterful hold wherewith the potter lifts his clay when he lays it upon the eternal whirring of the wheel." And later in the story :

"Through George's mind there wandered half-astonished thoughts about this strange compelling power of marriage—the deep grip it makes on life—the almost mechanical way in which it bears down resistance, provided only that certain compunctions, certain scruples still remain for it to work on."

And we feel that we have gained a deeper insight into the problems of marriage than has been afforded us by all the decadent novels that have ever been written.

There is a story told of one of the learned ladies who have held professorial chairs in the University of Bologna, that she lectured always behind a veil, lest the sight of her beauty should distract the minds of her pupils. Now, as every woman knows—and far more every man—any sort of public life for a good woman is impossible, except under the protection of that for which the veil stands in this story. But it remained for Mrs. Humphry Ward to embody this feature of the woman question in a novel, and she has done so with such exquisite truth and delicacy as defy description ; one must read it as it stands in the text. But perhaps the average woman will be as puzzled as was Letty to comprehend Marcella's remorse, since whatever she did was done for love of her husband. Was not Queen Louise of Prussia well-nigh sainted for using her feminine charm in the effort to win from Napoleon I. better terms for her spouse and country ? But the entrance of women as a class into the life of the colleges, the professions, and the trades has brought the logic of facts to bear upon this question ; and the answer has been the evolution of a new type, one to which the deliberate use of the charm of sex for any ulterior object—or except as a free gift for love's sake only—is, as Marcella felt it, a desecration. In her intercourse with George Tressady, Marcella only once deliberately unveils herself, if one may so express it ; it is a far more subtle touch that her influence over him did harm from the moment when she paused before the mirror to weigh her power of gaining him as a recruit.

We have referred to Letty as "in the grasp of the potter ;" all through the story we are made to feel this something "greater than we know" working upon and transforming into a higher likeness one and another of the persons of the story. The final catastrophe, though it comes upon us with a sense of shock, is in the line of the same force ; Tressady's earth-life is over, not because his happiness is irretrievably gone, for, on the contrary, he has lived past the worst, and his marriage, even his parliamentary life, have turned out "not so badly after all." But these experiences themselves have procured for him a development on the spiritual side of his nature, to secure which demands another atmosphere, and he is accordingly promoted. We believe that we are not forcing a deduction, but that this is Mrs. Ward's own argument for a future life, though the tragic close of the book may also be considered in another way as its logical conclusion, overwhelming in a common