

LITERARY NEWS, VIEWS AND CRITICISM

NEW BOOKS.

Terrible Work of a Conscience. The reader of Katharine Jones's story of "The Man Who Reaps" (Desmond Fitzgerald) will have no difficulty in understanding that Roxmoor Castle, "whose roof may have sheltered William the Conqueror" (see paper cover), was a grim and terrible place. It was a very large castle with corridors and towers and passages hewn in the living rock. The picture gallery in the Italian wing was a long way from the Red Parlor. Averling was seated in Roxmoor Castle, the Italian wing picture gallery, hung a portrait of a Lord Averling who had been a Crusader and a Knight Templar and had prayed fervently at every shrine between Temple Bar and Jerusalem. There was something on his conscience.

A small red flame burned perpetually in a niche under the Templar's portrait. We think it is in one of F. Anstey's poems that a deserving maternal injunction to remember his flames and to "keep a night light burning by the bed, tum." It is curious that Lord Ned Averling, who was an American, did not search in this plainly disguised niche for the papers explaining the Templar's crime in diverting the line of succession by suppressing a true heir, but for a long time he did not. He hid upon many secret sliding panels, explored many other niches and crannies and hidden drawers, but not the repository where the red flame burned. His sufferings were extreme, for he knew that for 700 years every Lord Averling had died a violent death at the age of 35, and he was now more than 31. His beautiful young wife Aline suffered as much as he did. She seems to have preserved her exquisite figure fairly well, though the story in one place notices, with straining of her eggshell outlines, "but the rouge with which she supplied roses for her bloodless cheeks, her ivory tinted dinner gown and the chain of dull gold with its amethyst cross that hung about her slender throat were, we are told, only a ghastly mockery. She wept fountains of tears in every part of the castle and perpetually. To be sure she had good reason.

Watson, the faithful valet, was always on hand and watchful. His step was like velvet. His presence in less dreadful circumstances. Dr. Warren, an expansive and capable mind, was present and observant. Kent, another American, Ned Averling's bosom friend, followed Ned about, fearless and strong in a determination to save him. Such company as came to the castle tried to be cheerful. Little Mariola, whose mother lay in the cemetery not far from the wood of copper beeches that consorted interestingly with the jagged turret about which circled the huge black shape that bore the semblance of a bird of prey, brought a basket of blackberries. But there could not be much cheerfulness or confidence of escape. There was good reason to believe that on October 31 at midnight Ned Averling would meet with the usual doom.

It was this way: The Templar in the picture gallery had been strangled by Averling for 700 years. It was a queer way to relieve his conscience. It was upon relieving his conscience, but the story points out that justice is eternal. The innocence of the victim did not matter. The Templar was as indiscriminating and as sure as the fate in the Greek tragedies. The brave Kent once stepped up to the portrait in the Italian gallery and boldly inquired: "What is your guilty secret, your hound of hell?" Long fingers immediately reached out from the canvas. The formidable person of the Templar bent forward. Kent started at the dreadful face. "A moment later like a pair of iron hands gripped his throat." Happily he was able to step outside the circle of red light, whereupon the hands let go.

Plainly it was a shocking fate that awaited Lord Ned. No wonder that he grew pale and spindling or that Aline wrung her wasted hands and wept more and more on the great staircase and in corners as the hours went by. Little Mariola was the rightful heir, but while she searched the papers to prove it? To find the papers was the thing. Then the Templar's hardened conscience would be discharged. Then it would be no longer necessary for him to strangle anybody. Innocent Averlings could live to be more than 35. Ned Averling undertook to find the papers. His method was terrible and strange. He died slowly, went back through 700 years, exchanged souls with his ancestor, the Templar, and tried to live again. Said he to Watson, who presented himself with some clothes: "Peace, thou prating varlet! Bring me the garments I am wont to use. Whence come these ill fitting robes?"

This will show that the Templar himself had really come back to life. Aline made search among the hoarded ancestral stores in the castle and found clothing that he had worn about the year 1290. He let Watson help him on with it and then inclined his head graciously to Kent and Dr. Warren and said: "Come to the castle hall." Presently he became excited and dashed all over the castle hunting for the concealed papers. A wheezy clock struck five. This was the afternoon of October 31. An hour later the clock struck six; though wheezy it was working very well. An oaken door that refused to open was beaten down with heavy tools. Water trickled down in streams in the cavern beyond. There were chapels, crosses, offices of saints. The Templar (in the body of Averling) prayed long at the tomb of a lady, doubtless the original Mariola. But the papers were not in the cavern.

The wheezy clock struck ten. Only two hours remained. The searcher stood in the tapestries parlor and stared out of the window at the moon. "The snarl of an angry wild beast suddenly ripped the air." A secret recess behind the panelling had been explored. It was empty. More recent places were explored, one of them under the fiery emblem on the hearth. The eyes of the Templar gleamed like balls of fire. Suddenly he disappeared. Aline gave a sharp cry. "Can no one find him?" she implored. "Is he gone forever?" A clock, apparently not the one that wheezed, struck eleven. "Kent ground his teeth. On the edge of twelve a cry like the piercing scream of a condor rent the air." The papers were found. The story says that they gleamed white in the finder's hand, but we think that they must have browned a little in 700 years. The doom of the old castle was lifted. No more stranglings necessary. The Templar's conscience was

clear. High time for that persistent organ to be at rest.

A Song of Wonder.

Prof. John Harrington Cox of West Virginia University has translated and adapted from old French texts that Song of Roland which grows ever more wonderful as the centuries proceed. His work is intended for boys and is published in the "Knighthood Series" under the title of "A Chevalier of Old France" (Little, Brown and Company, Boston). If the boys are not astonished by this tale they ought to be. What a host it was that King Marsile, who loved not God but served Mahomed, and his army of 12,000, led against the few French heroes! The Pagans as they marched through the valley were divided into twenty battalions. "Their helmets glittered with gold and precious gems, as did the shields and embroidered hauberts. Seven thousand trumpets sounded the charge and great was the noise throughout the whole region."

Roland called upon Oliver to strike with Halteclere and promised that he himself would strike with his good Durandal. The Archbishop said to the French: "Tomorrow not one of us will be living. But of one thing I am well assured. Holy Paradise is ready to receive you and you will be seated with the saints." Whereupon the French were so emboldened that there was not one of them who did not cry "Monjoie!" To be sure, the pagan Valdaibron, who had taken Jerusalem by treason and violated the temple of Solomon and slain the Patriarch before the Christian host struck with one blow the powerful Samson from his saddle. This was painful. "God!" cried the French. "What misfortune for a baron!" But Roland "with a single stroke of his trenchant Durandal slew both Valdaibron and his steed," and so Jerusalem and Samson were avenged at the very opening of this great battle.

There is a picture of Roland blowing his ivory horn—such a blast that it was heard for thirty leagues. The critic Taine says that there is much boasting in this narrative. Very likely, but we would not have one boast left out. There are several illustrations. The text is lovely.

An Expert on the Turks.

Having lived for forty years among the Turks, Sir Edwin Pears's judgment of them, as expressed in "Turkey and Its People" (Methuen and Company, George H. Doran Company), may be regarded as authoritative. It is no didactic work that he has undertaken, but an explanation of the many peoples that live in the Ottoman Empire and the lands recently under its rule, their nature, modes of thought, beliefs and capabilities. He does not hesitate to illustrate his points by anecdotes and experiences of his own or of persons qualified to know, which adds to the interest of his book. The informality of the style does not detract from the importance of the statements. A sketch of the Government and of the Turkish elements is followed by accounts of the Greeks, the Vlachs, the Pomaks, the Jews, the Danubians, the Albanians, the Armenians, the foreigners in Turkish lands, of conditions in Macedonia and Asia Minor. There are portraits of many men of note in Ottoman politics. It is a book that will be helpful to all who wish to understand the perplexity of Near Eastern questions.

Two Considerations of Hard Times.

A practical consideration of hard times appears in George H. Hull's "Industrial Depression" (Frederick A. Stokes Company). Mr. Hull is president of the American Pig Iron Storage Warrant Company, and his familiarity with conditions in the iron and steel trade he puts to good use in his book, frequently illustrating his points with incidents in recent iron and steel history. Mr. Hull goes at his task of determining the causes of industrial depression in a systematic fashion. He states and numbers alleged causes, excludes many, and reduces the number of probable causes to twenty-one, and these he ultimately sums up in the single phrase, "high price of construction." He postulates the theory that the desire to get all one can for the money one has to invest, is at the bottom of individual depressions, inasmuch as investors cease to buy as soon as prices reach too high a level. Overproduction, Presidential elections, creation, combinations of capital, speculation, and the various causes are eliminated, either on the score of being of local concern or else because they have no direct bearing on the matter in hand. Mr. Hull applies his theory to industrial depressions in the United States from 1833 to 1908 and gives a careful analysis of the causes. He is careful to differentiate in these analyses between financial panics and industrial depressions, declaring that they are not of necessity associated. The book is an interesting and in many ways original discussion of economic distress.

An investigation initiated by the National Consumers League and conducted by Mrs. Sue Ainslie Clark is presented in "Making Both Ends Meet" (Macmillan) by Mrs. Clark and Miss Edith Wyatt. An inquiry is made into the income and outlay of self-supporting women and is in part the actual narrative of women in factories and laundries. In the first six chapters the authors give a number of individual stories and detailed accounts of the shirts and cloakmakers' strikes to illustrate the hard times which seem inevitable for the average working girl. Throughout these chapters unstandardized conditions are mentioned as the underlying cause of irregular work, of strikes, and of poor physique, and in the last chapter Frederick W. Taylor supplies a definition of scientific management which, in the opinion of the authors, provides a possible deliverance. The facts in the book are presented with interest and conviction and the conclusions with restraint.

Theory and Practice in Politics.

The story of the tariff, from its utilization as a war tax in the sixties to the adoption of the Payne-Aldrich schedules, is told by Ida M. Tarbell in "The Tariff in Our Own Time" (Macmillan). Some parts of this book have already appeared in the shape of magazine articles, but in the reprinted form they have been expanded somewhat and additional chapters have been written. Miss Tarbell says in her preface that public opinion has never had a fair chance at tariff moulding and that "if the popular understanding of protection as expressed in our elections had been conscientiously followed there would be to-day no duties on iron and steel products, no cheap cotton and cotton mixtures and certainly none on a great variety of raw materials, probably including wool." Her narrative is built upon the thesis that popular will has been thwarted. It is written with Miss Tarbell's usual fervor. She includes

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John Rawn is a book that you cannot sidestep if it once gets in your way. Its pages are packed with vivid pictures and wise commentaries. Between its covers the conflicting currents of contemporary life are seen winding to their inevitable destination. —Boston Globe

You will remember that the great force toward cleaning up the slaughter houses was furnished by Sinclair's Jungle. It may be that this great disclosure, in John Rawn, of the selfishness of the rich and the poverty of the poor may hold the solution of the problem which is now the most gigantic one in the world. —Harvey W. Wiley, Chief Chemist of Dept. of Agriculture

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much first hand testimony by those who were engaged in one way or another in making the schedules. Miss Tarbell's intent is undoubtedly earnest; she has gone at her task with vigor and has made it interesting. Allowing for her frankly avowed hostility to tariffs as they have been framed, Miss Tarbell's book is a good history of this phase of recent economic history. Senator Theodore E. Burton of Ohio has put into book form the substance of a series of lectures delivered fifteen months ago on the George Leib Harrison Foundation at the University of Pennsylvania, in which he deals with the interrelations of the Government with corporations. To the six chapters which cover the ground of the lectures Senator Burton has appended a seventh, in which he discusses the decision of the Supreme Court in the Standard Oil and American Tobacco cases and gives a brief forecast of their probable effect on future governmental regulation. In a generous appendix he reprints extracts from Chief Justice White's opinions, Justice Harlan's dissenting opinion in the Standard Oil case, the text of the Sherman anti-trust act and the Aldrich plan for monetary reform. The volume, "Corporation and the State" (Appleton) is a convenient handbook on the problem of corporation regulation.

Another series of lectures done into book form is Prof. Leonard T. Hobhouse's "Social Evolution and Political Theory" (The Columbia University Press). Dr. Hobhouse, who is professor of sociology in the University of London, delivered these lectures on the Beer Foundation at Columbia in April, 1911. He has made certain additions, but in the main the lecture form is preserved. The subject matter lies at the base of political science. Prof. Hobhouse discusses at length social origins and the causes which underlie social change, speaking of the growth of the State, the relation of the individual to it, the meaning of progress and its relation with the struggle for existence. He speaks with circumspection also of the value and limitations of eugenics. The lectures are of ready value to the philosopher of politics.

"Commission Government in American Cities" (Macmillan) is a book which deals definitely with definite problems. Ernest S. Bradford has taken up this phase of the difficult question of municipal government and shows the experience of Galveston, Des Moines, Cedar Rapids and other cities with the various manifestations of the commission system. He tells

the narrative of the origin and growth of the plan, from its inception as a governmental expedient at Galveston in the times immediately after the hurricane of 1900 to the commission system as being tried in many parts of the United States. The volume is a good student's handbook of the commission plan and will serve sufficiently as a guide to those who wish to consider in greater detail this effort to solve the problem of municipal government in the United States.

Mr. Arnold Bennett. It is no service that his publishers are rendering Mr. Arnold Bennett, no assistance to whatever he hoped to accomplish by his visit to America, when they scrape together his obscure journalistic effusions and offer them to a public which is only ready to accept his best. The flaunting of matter the republication of which would only be excusable in a posthumous effort at completeness of the writings of an author of established fame, is disconcerting to readers who are trying to make out whether Mr. Bennett is really somebody or merely a writer of rather striking cleverness and versatility. We are very grateful to him for some brilliant things in diverse styles, "Buried Alive," some of the "Five Towns" stories, some clever plays, the intention in "Clayhanger"; we are still in doubt, in spite of so much excellent work, whether he has something to say for himself or whether he is merely striving to catch the momentary whim of the public, and the publication of these negligible productions tends to create prejudice against him. It is all respectable, journalistic work, which has a justifiable reason for existence, for a man must live, and of which Mr. Bennett has no cause to feel ashamed, but it is all extremely commonplace, and the moment when Mr. Bennett's place in the world of letters is in question is not the time for calling attention to that phase of his industry.

The "Police Farce" (George H. Doran Company) will add nothing to Mr. Bennett's reputation. Though the point in each is extravagant, the talk is natural, the plays are mildly amusing, and would create no flutter, even in the primest of drawing rooms. The miscellaneous collection of short stories called "The Matador of the Five Towns" (George H. Doran Company) will be found entertaining. In them Mr. Bennett tries his hand at several styles, grim, tragic, realistic, caustic humor and even a touch of the open road. The scene of many of them is in the potteries district, where he is at home. The title story deals with the infatuation for football; the pathetic side seems rather mechanical. That called "The Death of Simon Page" is as good in its way as anything Mr. Bennett has written.

The New American Athens. With the transference of the center of letters and of culture from the banks of the Charles to those of the White River it was full time that Indianapolis should take its place in literature with Boston, New York, Chicago and San Francisco. That duty Mr. Meredith Nicholson has taken on himself in "A Hoosier Chronicle" (Houghton Mifflin Company) with great seriousness. The other lights of the Indiana school, when they have abstained from pure romance or absorbing mystery, have been content to touch on the rural beauties of the State, the homely life of the pioneers. The poets, Mr. Riley and Mr. Elmore, pipe on the oaten reed. Mr. Nicholson, therefore, breaks new ground in depicting the metropolis of the State, the mother of "best sellers," with its variegated, social, newspaper and political life. It takes courage to blend Indiana politics with romantic fiction.

To carry out his purpose Mr. Nicholson has been obliged to modify his literary style. His previous efforts have been in the line of rapid, headlong action; now he turns to the slow, deliberate method, which has proved remarkably successful in some instances. We should judge that he had found his models in the neighboring State of Ohio; the minute realism of the local description, with its municipal buildings and street cars, its uplift movements directed by its women, suggests the later techniques of Mr. Howells; the leisurely pace is that of Mrs. Watts. A civilization which reveres James Whitcomb Riley as Boston did

Longfellow and which glories in memories of Dan Voorhees and Thomas A. Hendricks is interesting, even if, as the author admits, it is the mother of candidates for the Vice-Presidency. The story is worth reading, if only for the sake of the capable, outspoken old lady who controls matters. The hero enables us to see some phases of newspaper and political life; the heroine, we imagine, stands for all that is best in the new woman. We have found them both rather wooden, and the various politicians as lifeless as their make believe politics. The author seems to have some half-hearted interest in reform movements and an admiration which he does not dare to express for the old, bad, violent methods. The plot is rather trivial to be spun out to such length, and the reader would be glad to dispense with much of it for more about Indianapolis and more real life.

Some New Fiction.

The day Dorinda did up her hair for the first time was eventful, as Mr. Charles Lee chronicles in "Dorinda's Birthday" (E. P. Dutton and Company). The reader will be glad to make the acquaintance of the kindly Cornish folk gathered for the bell ringing, he will be pleased with frequent poetical outbursts of the author, and he will be charmed with the behavior of the young mix first conscious of her power as an attractive young woman. The lesson she receives is needlessly harsh, for evil should have no place in an idyl pitched in this key, but she comes out of it all right. The young man with a double personality troubles a rather priggish New Englander, who has wandered into Virginia, in Amélie Rives's "Hidden House" (J. B. Lippincott Company). He falls in love with both manifestations though they are the wholly discordant, and instead of marrying the young woman, which would have probably destroyed the psychological puzzle, he prudently withdraws and debates setting himself which embodiment he preferred. The author writes in a highly lyrical strain, but uses painfully prosaic words at times, which jar.

What gentleness and kind feeling a Nebraska community possesses seems to be monopolized by the town fool in Mr. Ramsey Bonser's "A Knight in Denim" (Charles Scribner's Sons). The hero is actually an idiot who repulsive habits, but has craving for hard work, a trick of helping women, whom the saner citizens maltreat, and an instinct that enables him to foil evildoers. Whenever his actions arouse the reader's sympathy the author makes him act so foolishly that only pity can be felt for him. This half-witted creature is the only original and interesting character in the book. He becomes involved in the troubles of a conventionally mismatched couple; the tortured woman, whom he helps, leaves him shabbily at the end. It is a curious study of a type that is common enough, except for the manifestations of chivalry the author endows it with.

So long as the story deals with the mountain people in Mr. Payne Erskine's "The Mountain Girl" (Little, Brown and Company) it is pleasant and natural, if not very original, for the undeveloped virtues of the wild mountaineers, whether North Carolina, Kentucky or Tennessee, have become a commonplace of modern fiction. Those regions seem to be the last refuge for primeval virtue in these degenerate days. The transformation of the hero into a British peer and the consequent sufferings of the heroine belong to a lower plane of literature. The minor characters are good and entertaining, particularly the bad ones, and the story is readable.

Another appeal to modern greed is made by Mr. George Randolph Chester in "Five Thousand an Hour" (The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Indianapolis). The title indicates the rate of speed at which the hero undertakes to make a million dollars. The story shows clearly that the author has the stage in mind; it is written with the literary charm of "novelized drama." The first scene, at the horse races, is amusing, and defines the characters. After that there is woful poverty of invention, the author repeats the same situation and the conclusion is inane. Even for burlesque it is pretty stupid, but theatre audiences have accepted more inane stuff. We are willing to believe that a rich heiress may be kidnapped in New York

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BY WILLIAM H. RIDEING

Of the Editorial Staff of "The Youth's Companion"

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by a man single handed, or that he can run alone an oceangoing motor boat by power drawn from a Labrador waterfall, or that the small boat may contain many elaborately furnished apartments as Mr. Edward Kimball asks us to do in "The Dominant Chord" (L. C. Page and Company, Boston), but when, after sailing due south from New York at marvellous speed, he announces a latitude and longitude which puts the vessel in the forests of Quebec, bank of Ottawa, we feel that something must be wrong. Not all the pirate adventures nor pursuits by United States vessels can restore confidence, nor make us believe that a man and woman restricted to each other's company for ten weeks must fall in love. It is a weak solution of Jules Verne, containing solid chunks of make believe science, and catalogues of house furnishings. In the cosmopolitan society outside the pale that flocks from one gambling resort to another, such as Mrs. Belloc Lowndes describes in "The Chink in the Armour" (Charles Scribner's Sons), we find a charming and abnormally foolish English woman. She is the victim of a couple of adventurers, husband and wife, who have no compunctions about murder and who, after getting rid of others, determine to rob and kill her. She is saved through no fault of her own by a gentlemanly French gambler, whom she marries. The mystery is subordinate to the philandering of the two, in which the heroine displays amazing ignorance of all social conventions. How the title applies we have not discovered.

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are records of the author's moods, but hardly of New York. All the interest of stories pertains to the brilliant, vigorous descriptions of Breton costumes and beliefs which M. Anatole le Braz publishes under the title "The Night of Fires" (Longmans, Green and Company). Whatever is sordid and unpleasant in these escapes the eye of the poet and the ethnographer who watches the scene. He puts the spirit they once had, and still retain in a measure, into the ceremonial; he puts life into the peasants who share in them and makes his readers see it all through his eyes. M. le Braz is fortunate in his translator, Mrs. Frances M. Gostling, who has written delightful books of travel and is almost as ardent a lover of Brittany as the author. Continued on Ninth Page.

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