

New Fiction

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rest of their lives seem worth the living. As the silent, sleepy cliff slid away behind the train it seemed almost like an old friend setting out upon a long journey."

Whatever the miracle of the lady was, it is not quite done when it has set right the lives of that old quartet. Twenty years later, when the impudent engaged young woman and her husband have fallen upon similar gray days, and most of the parents have gone their way, there is a mysterious conversation with Something in the same room where the mysterious lady had lived for a summer.

Perhaps the best summary of the secret is the statement:

We are all treasure seekers in the beginning, . . . pitched into life one way or another, but all convinced that there's hidden treasure somewhere. . . . I think she knew where the treasure was. . . . Not in you or me. But in Emily's idea of you which must, so to speak, be pulling you up a bit higher than yourself, all the time. And your idea of Emily . . . working the same way. And so with me, and Joan; . . . just two ordinary mortals, living together, and believing in one another; . . . it's that which is the Undying Thing.

It is a book which by its nature defies cold, bald analysis. The essence of it would evaporate in any such attempt. It is rather like a complex piece of music which must be heard to be understood. But for the understanding hearer it has a message. HENRY WALKER.

BARBARA JUSTICE. By Diana Patrick. E. P. Dutton & Co.

MISS PATRICK is another of the younger generation of British novelists who are making a definite and, quite possibly, a lasting mark in current literary history. Her work should be better known here than it is, as it has qualities that demand serious attention as well as the commoner elements that make for popularity. She is able to combine tragedy that is almost Greek in its severe dignity with a strain of romanticism, of sensuous beauty, without producing a discord. It is rather like a musical resolution, from one mode to another, with perfect understanding of the harmonics of it and the rules of such a transition. In addition, she has an impish humor, and is even capable of excellent grotesques in her character drawing. There is a tenseness and a curiously feminine quality in the story that remind one of Emily Brontë and "Wuthering Heights" (not that there is the least outward similarity), but she is a grown-up Brontë, free of the inhibitions and incompleteness that went with the Brontëan era. And she successfully brings her story out into a quiet sea of hopeful, happy romance, without doing any violence to the plot—in itself a notable achievement.

Miss Patrick is thoroughly of today in her frankness. She does not evade brute facts, and when Barbara is attacked and overcome by the "primeval brute" man there is no mawkish reticence about it. But neither is there any of the too common modern leer. It is stark tragedy, naked and uncompromising in its hideousness, and it is thrown up into sharper distinctness by following directly upon a tenderly beautiful love idyll. From that point onward Barbara passes through a series of emotional crises, including further tragedies, but always keeping her courage and her own cleanness of soul, to emerge finally into quiet waters. It is beautifully done.

In part, it is the familiar theme of the young girl, with a Gipsy ancestry, lowly born, but with the soul of a poet and the longing to escape into a finer life, to rise above sordidness into a cleaner upper air. After her first tragic mishap she gradually comes to realize that she was still essentially the same, that "self respect was wounded but not slain." The whole further process is unconventional, but entirely convincing. She runs away from her home, after her mother's death, and after a brief service at a country inn she becomes one of a troupe of "diving girls" who give swimming exhibitions at a seaside resort. Here another sort of adventure comes to her. In the devotion of an artist, Tracy, who is an invalid, aware that he has but a few years to live. He loves her, with a poetic, chivalrous devotion, and with an almost fantastic manner that reminds one a little of some of Locke's

eccentric heroes. He finally marries her in order that she may inherit his small fortune and be safe, but it is merely an outward union. It is a difficult situation to make plausible, but Miss Patrick achieves it. At Tracy's death the original hero, Elliot, returns and all is well.

If there is a weak spot it is in this youthful hero, Elliot. He is a little conventional and lacks something of the solidity of the others, but one is willing to believe in him, for Barbara's sake. Altogether, it is a fine piece of work. H. L. PANGBORN.

SUNNY-SAN. By Onoto Watanna. George H. Doran Company.

A SIMPLE little story engagingly narrated, with a practiced skill that makes much of small things. A Japanese girl of mixed bloods stands in the center of interest. We see her first as novice in a tea house, trying her timid steps with a saddened heart, for her beloved mother, the star of the establishment, lies dead in an upper room. A patron, old and ugly, desires Sunny. She turns from him in anger and thereby risks severe punishment. But four young Americans, traveling with a tutor, save her by carrying her off in dashing Western style.

Then they find themselves with a ward on their hands. Being young men of means they form the "Sunny Syndicate," finance her, and leave her in charge of an American missionary. Sunny comes to America, much to the embarrassment of the four, particularly Jerry, the instigator of it all. The embarrassment at her coming turns to a contest for the honor of housing her when they see how very charming she is in her smart American clothes. Jerry wins out, by Sunny's own will, and she stays with him in his studio.

But even in Bohemian New York no young architect can share his studio apartment with a particularly pretty girl without some trouble. The trouble comes through Jerry's aristocratic mother and the girl she wants him to marry. Sunny leaves the studio and learns something of the seamy side of New York life. But she finds a girl friend and finds also her runaway American father. It all comes right in the end, just as we want it to come.

Japanese and American ideas of politeness—and other matters—are neatly differentiated, with fairness to both. But it must be admitted that the art of learning to please, which is taught the geishas as their chief life philosophy, has much to recommend it.

And we all—except, possibly a few inveterate Broadwayites who cannot live but in the midst of unseemly noise—will sympathize with Sunny's feelings as she wandered the streets alone and disconsolate.

She sensed the fact that she was in the Land of Barbarians, where every one was racing and leaping and screaming in an hysteria of speed. Noise, noise, incessant noise and movement . . . that was America! No one stopped to think; no polite words were uttered to the stranger. It was all a chaos, a madhouse, wherein dark figures rushed by like shadows in the dark and little children played in the mud of the streets.

And yet the difference between the sweet, clean, quiet Oriental land of her birth, where the beauty of orderly existence cloaks the cruelty of one individual to another—and of sex to sex—and the true kindness of individual to individual that underlies the noisy, messy thing we call life in America is well portrayed in the incidents of the story and the bits of wisdom floating through it.

The four young men of the Sunny Syndicate are quite real, more or less, and Katy Clarry is a delight. Sunny herself is a novel little heroine and somehow quite believable, even if we don't understand why the conscientious missionary who had her in his charge all those months did not teach her better English. GRACE ISABEL COLBRON.

MEN OF AFFAIRS. By Roland Pertwee. Alfred A. Knopf.

MR. PERTWEE certainly gives the reader who is in search of "thrills" even more than his money's worth in the abundance of this tale. It takes two very able bodied, up-and-coming heroes to carry it off, and, of course, two heroines, although one of the ladies hasn't much of a speaking part. And he is also liberal with his villains; a whole "syndicate" of them, aided by others who are practicing villainy on their own hook. Fortunately the two heroes look so much alike that

they are perfectly interchangeable; when one approaches the point of exhaustion and has to give up the center of the stage to recuperate, the other steps into his place and the performance goes happily on, without having to stop to take breath.

The point of it lies in the astonishing resemblance of the heroes; the only noticeable difference between them being that one has a merry twinkle in his eye and the other is a solemn chap. The solemn one, Barraclough, has discovered a marvelous field of radium, where the mineral just lies 'round in chunks, and he is trying to escape from London with the aid of the good syndicate of "men of affairs" who are backing him, to nail down the necessary concession. No one but Barraclough knows the secret of the location. The other wicked syndicate is trying to block him. The other hero, Richard, is hired to impersonate Barraclough so that he can go on and clean things up.

Richard is kidnaped by the bad syndicate and put through a wonderful "third degree," a surprising example of torture with modern improvements, including poison gas. But being a hero he is of course sufficiently tough to stand it.

The best figure in the story is the independent villain, Smith, who does some sleuthing for his own purposes that would do credit to even a Sherlock Holmes. One feels a little sorry that he has to be foiled in the end. There is a pleasant human touch, too, about Barraclough's mother, a mildly humorous old lady of quick wit and indomitable courage. Mr. Pertwee can do better work than this, on a higher level—as he has demonstrated in other books—but this story is a very good one of its kind; genuinely entertaining in spite of its extravagance.

THE GRAY PHANTOM'S RETURN. By Herman Landon. W. J. Watt & Co.

THE many friends of the infallible and gentlemanly crook by choice, known as the Gray Phantom, will welcome his return. This most ingenious and resourceful personage comes out of his pleasant country retreat when he hears that he is suspected of murder. To clear his own name he sets out on an attempt to find the true murderer, whom he believes to be an agent of the Duke, his chief rival in the Underworld. Scarce has he set foot in New York when his adventures begin and follow so fast and furious that the reader lags breathless a block or so behind.

The victim of the gang was an old tobacconist, suspected of being a "fence," and the mystery was how the murderer escaped. This last the Phantom sets out to discover, for the dying man is said to have named him as the killer. He finds himself be-

tween two camps of hunters, the police who want him for the murder and the Duke's gang, who want him because of orders from their chief. The interesting peculiarity of the Phantom is not that he eludes discovery, but that he is always being discovered, tied up, bound, gagged and handcuffed, not to mention an occasional dose of chloroform, and yet his keen brain and strong, skillful hand got him out of any position,

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