

of the work an enthusiasm for education of the highest sort, that of painstaking, scientific investigation, at once full of sympathetic imagination for different conditions from those under which the writers actually work, and at the same time a keen criticism as to the value of the institutions and methods observed both theoretically and practically.

Miss Page is impressed with the freedom of behaviour in children in the American schools, but points out the disturbing element produced by the immigration of foreigners. Miss Zimmern remarks on the contrast between the amount of oral work and written work. "The English school aims at written, the American at oral work." Again she says, "American teachers use the blackboard less than we do, while the pupils use it more." Miss Burstall quotes an American saying: "We have no established church; we have established education." Miss Burstall writes with much strength on the suggestive subject of co-education of boys and girls. Miss Bramwell and Miss Hughes admire the excellent provision made for the training of teachers for the American elementary schools. Yet Miss Hughes says, and her judgment is founded on experience, that England and Wales have made much better provision for High School teachers.

To merely mention such points as these would be unjust, were I not to add that the books bristle with scores of like suggestive instances. The reading of them cannot but be stimulating to educationists.

But, once more, it is to the value of the continuance of such observation and investigation as that of Miss Bramwell, Miss Burstall, Miss Hughes, Miss Page, and Miss Zimmern that attention should be drawn. If these educational researches began and ended in the five essays under review, the Gilchrist Trustees would deserve congratulation on having chosen such keen-sighted and laborious Commissioners. But the experiment is more than a mere justification of the choice of these ladies. The Gilchrist Trustees have set their hands to plough new soil, which has been found promising. They may, then, be tiding over the time till the matter becomes a national undertaking, when English students of education shall be sent to study foreign systems with as generous provision as American students are sent by public bodies to France, Germany, and England—or as even the Roumanian Government sends an educationist into England and Wales—to study educational institutions and methods. If the Gilchrist Trustees can see their way to continue to grant travelling scholarships to teachers, these American Reports will become epoch-marking. In any case, the Trustees have deserved well of the commonwealth for their public spirit.

FOSTER WATSON.

Our Health in Winter.—Dr. Andrew Wilson, writing in *Lloyd's Newspaper* on diet, says: "The teaching of nature should never be neglected, and in the matter of winter food let us see we are not wrong, and take sufficient fat, for the changes that result in the wear and tear of our bodies are lessened in intensity by the fat of food, and the need for flesh is always less when fat forms a due proportion of our diet." The Doctor proceeds to enumerate natural products that are admirable, among them "Cocoa" with its contained Cocoa Butter. Relatively to this it may be said that *EPSS'S PREPARED COCOA* retains all the constituents of the natural Cocoa, including the oil or intact. —[ADVT.]

NEW NOVELS.

The Good Ship Mohock. By W. Clark Russell. In 2 vols. (Chatto & Windus.)

The Play-Actress. By S. R. Crockett. (Fisher Unwin.)

The Devil's Playground. By John Mackie. (Fisher Unwin.)

A Racing Rubber. By Hawley Smart. In 2 vols. (White.)

The Gates of Dawn. By Fergus Hume. (Sampson Low.)

James Macpherson, the Highland Freebooter. By J. Gordon Phillips. (Alexander Gardner.)

His Last Amour. By Monopole. (Digby, Long & Co.)

Cliff Days. By Brian Rosegarth. (Fisher Unwin.)

Phantasms. By Wirt Gerrare. (The Roxburgh Press.)

Martin Hewitt, Investigator. By Arthur Morrison. (Ward, Lock & Bowden.)

THERE is a trifle too much of the pot-boiler about *The Good Ship Mohock*, although its plot is sufficiently ingenious, and of incidents it has not a few. It suggests nothing so much as that Mr. Clark Russell, having no particular inspiration, set himself deliberately to manufacture a story which, although of the sea, should yet have a heroine, which should tell of pirates, and which, therefore, should have a scoundrel captain. Mr. Amelius Sinclair, that scoundrel captain, is fairly well drawn, and so is the heroine, his stepdaughter, although the boy reader will share in the captain's dislike of his relative, for she is, to say the very least, a bit of a sneak. The seizure of *The Mohock* by the crew of sham shipwrecked sailors looks very artificial; and the high jinks of the scratch lot of passengers recall the comedy indulged in at a snowed-up hotel in the depth of winter. It is needless to say, however, that *The Good Ship Mohock* is readable. Mr. Russell can raise a storm whenever he chooses, and the final tempest of his second volume must be allowed to be very effective. The interest of the poor passengers of *The Mohock*—although they have the making of a good burlesque company among them—in the mysterious and shady connexion of the captain of their ship with the pirates who seize it, is well sustained. The death of Sinclair is a strong bit of melodramatic business, and the finding of his body is distinctly disagreeable as well as strong. Altogether, *The Good Ship Mohock* is not one of those books by which fair critics will judge its author's position as a novelist.

Mr. Crockett has, in his little story of *The Play-Actress*, tried a daring experiment, and has achieved a remarkable, if not an absolute, success. He has sought to bring the natural wilds of Galloway and the moral wilds of London into the closest association, with the help of the Rev. Gilbert Rutherford—an intensely religious man of the type, if not quite of the stature, of Bishop Mylre and Jean Valjean. The "Great Preacher"—by the way, Mr. Crockett's repetition of

this phrase becomes tedious and almost irritating—is quite master of the situation, whether he is in his own Galloway parish or behind the scenes of a theatre, or among a company of reckless London bloods. His final triumph, when he actually discovers something that is not altogether evil in the adventuress widow of his son, is as good as anything of the kind in the pages of Mr. George MacDonald. Scarcely inferior to Gilbert Rutherford are the play-actress and the little child whom, in the character of "the lass in black," she introduces to its grandfather. As for Johnny Spencer, who, in the end, plays the prince to Miss Upton's Cinderella, one can, without much difficulty, forgive him (or Mr. Crockett) his dubious London slang for the sake of his warm heart, his good sense, and his very useful muscular Christianity. Nor should the gamin whom Mr. Crockett introduces for the edification and amusement of Gilbert Rutherford be overlooked. His argot is perhaps overdone, but he has the soul of a Gavroche nevertheless. *The Play-Actress* is far and away the best of Mr. Crockett's shorter stories.

The most alarming thing about Mr. Mackie's very readable story of *The Devil's Playground* is its title. After all, it is but the tolerably familiar combination of love and adventure, and above all nobility of character, which triumphs over the perils involved in both. No doubt "His Satanic Majesty"—as the usurper of the peculiarly wild playground in the very wild north-west of Canada, which forms the scene of this book, is styled rather too often—does his best to make Mrs. Tredennis and her old lover Dick Travers "go wrong." But he fails to do anything more than nearly kill them of cold and starvation. In the supreme moment of their lives, when they part to all appearance for ever, principle triumphs over passion, and they discover, through explanations, that they have been parted by a misunderstanding, not by perfidy on the part of either. The closing chapters are rather tame. Mrs. Tredennis finds her husband, whom she had married because he was regarded as "desirable," and because she thought Dick a traitor, to be a very fine fellow; and Dick on his part finds Miss Dalton, who nurses him, to be a charming as well as a wealthy girl, and eminently worth marrying. All the characters in the story are good. The best is the guide philosopher, and friend of Dick Travers, who certainly manages to keep as old a head on as young shoulders as is possible or perhaps desirable.

The latest posthumous novel of Hawley Smart is not one of his best. Indeed, most of the incidents in *A Racing Rubber*, and also the environment of the leading characters, appear almost painfully familiar. One does get very tired of the morality—and still more of the immorality—of the turf, and of the devices adopted by trainers and impecunious, though "knowing," persons to checkmate each other. It may be allowed, however, that the Regent's Park ice disaster is introduced with considerable skill, to give an excuse to the hard-up son of the squire and the

daughter of one of the squire's farmers to fall in love with each other; and that Reginald Chacewater and Kate Darley, though a very matter-of-fact Romeo and Juliet, hold the field in the story against all the other characters. Why, indeed, the young squire, who has ability enough to write a tolerably successful story, should take a fancy for Kate Darley, whose rebellion against boarding-school control has made her a circus girl, is not very clear. But Kate herself is a most delightful and thoroughly English girl; and if she shows that she "has a bit of a temper," few will regret that she should do so at the expense of Clara Wargrave, who is a very disagreeable specimen of the "designing minx," and has no objection to tell lies or send anonymous letters, if only she may destroy the character and matrimonial chances of a rival. Tom Bramber, the second string to Kate's bow; Jim Darley, her brother; and the old squire himself, are good illustrations of Hawley Smart's skill as a portrait-painter.

The Gates of Dawn is the best thing that Mr. Fergus Hume has yet done—so very good as to suggest that he has again struck oil, and for the first time since the day of *The Mystery of a Hansom Cab* came to an end. The hero, indeed, does not make a promising start when he comes upon the scene in the first chapter; for, although he is dressed as a gamekeeper,

"Aristocrat was writ largely on face and bearing. His six feet of stalwart manhood showed the influence of athletic training; his masterful mien and the imperious look of his grey eyes, firm lips, and wide nostrils betrayed the class to which he belonged."

But Lord Ardleigh—such is the true name and title of the pseudo-gamekeeper—improves as he goes on, and plunges into mystery after mystery, in which a certain pretty Meg, a Mother Jericho, a Tinker Tim, and, above all, a fiendish Miss Lindisfarne, play their parts. The plot is conventional in a way; but Mr. Hume has put a great deal of work into it, and has, besides, scored a decided success for the first time in reproducing the humours of English rural life. *The Gates of Dawn*, in short, recalls the work of Mr. B. L. Farjeon.

In *James Macpherson* Mr. J. Gordon Phillips has produced a really spirited romance, taking for his hero the Highland freebooter who, according to legend and Burns, "play'd a spring and danced it round, below the gallows tree." Mr. Phillips is obviously hampered a good deal by the fact that he has to allow his herculean—and, indeed, superhuman—Highlander to be finally captured and hanged. Still, he is able to give the freebooter, on the average, one adventure per day. Macpherson is weak, of course, where most strong men are weak—in regard to women. But he makes a quiet and respectable marriage in the long run; and there is really no excuse except the facts of accepted history for his death, as even his relentless enemy, Braco, changes his nature and tries to save him on the scaffold. It would be no difficult matter to pick holes

in *James Macpherson*, to point out incoherencies of plot and faults of style; but, altogether, Mr. Phillips has the making of at least an average romancer in him. There is certainly no reason why he should not produce a series of stories quite as good as those which gave the author of *The Wolf of Badenoch* a temporary celebrity.

The best that can be said of *His Last Amour* is that it is an agreeable disappointment. The title suggests disreputable realism, whereas the story is in reality a bit of innocent and conventional melodrama. Valerie Campbell, who is greatly enamoured of a very walking-gentlemanly Gerald Methuen, pledges herself to marry a miserly sensual David Leeson, who is older than her father, and has that weak man at his mercy through having discovered that he is a forger. The horrid David, although he is a widower, and ought really to know better, has a mistress named Lucy Grant. While he is trying to terrify Lucy into relieving him of her unpleasant and compromising presence, she meets by accident with her death. The accident looks so very like murder that Leeson in turn takes an overdose of laudanum, and so saves Valerie the trouble and risk involved in a sham elopement with the Duke of Yaverland who, by the way, is far too sprightly, not to say passionate, a gentleman for his years. The Duke turns out to be Gerald's father, and to have a fragment of a conscience. In *His Last Amour*, in fact, we have a rather conventional plot evolved in a conventional manner. Nor is there anything notable about it.

Cliff Days is a clever, repellent, and quite George Mooreish exercise in English realism. Kennet, the noisiest of a band of London brothers whose chief delight in life is what one of them terms a "whiskey crawl," strolls a great deal on the beach in the course of a holiday with Gertrude Albyn, the daughter of a colonel. The colonel is quite conventional, and so for that matter is Gertrude, for she is engaged to a preposterously wealthy Belgian stockbroker of the name of De Clery. But this does not prevent her from walking with Kennet, and boxing his ears and kissing him till "he seized her and kissed her mouth, forehead, and eyes hard and long"—so very hard indeed that "there was a trace of blood on her lip." After this there should have been an elopement. But Gertrude regards herself as too "sensible" a girl to do anything of the sort; and so she deliberately gives herself away to the stockbroker, while Kennet returns to London, tells his story to the only one of his companions who, because he is very hard-headed, keeps occasionally sober, and then goes off for a night's dissipation. The central story of *Cliff Days* is well told, though in the last degree disagreeable. The gaieties of Kennet and his "chums" have, however, a forced and unreal look. If the author of *Cliff Days* is a new hand, there is no reason why he (or she) should not write a story quite up to the *Keynotes* level.

Perhaps it is unfair to the author of *Phantasms* to regard his book as an experiment

in short, gruesome fiction, and not—as the elaborate Introduction may seem to show—as an important and serious contribution to science of the "Psychical Research" type. But if it be so taken, there can be no question that Mr. Wirt Gerrare has a marvellous power of playing with the horrible. For haunting, all-dominating ghostliness I know nothing to beat the two best stories in the collection, "The Dark Shadow" and "The Sleepless Man." In the former the introduction of "the curse" of a wretched woman as told by the nurse who attends to her, and also of the "thing," in the person of the woman's son, who gives effectiveness to the curse, is an almost unique *tour de force*. Yet one may wish that Mr. Wirt Gerrare's imagination—if it be imagination—will, next time he writes, find its way out of the Valley of that Shadow which is more terrible than death itself.

Martin Hewitt is certainly the most ingenious and entertaining of the numerous successors of Sherlock Holmes, although there is about him none of that eerie diabolism which almost places Mr. Conan Doyle's creation on a level, for genius, with the monstrosities of Edgar Allan Poe. Hewitt is, indeed, but a painstaking believer in the theory that genius is an infinite capacity for taking trouble, and he has not so many mannerisms as Professor Moriarty's enemy. Mr. Morrison, as a rule, works on the sound principle that the person who seems the most unlikely to commit a crime with which he is in one way or another associated is the criminal. But the working out of the principle has a superficially more reasonable look than anything of a similar character even in Mr. Conan Doyle's pages. There is not one of the stories in this collection that is not ingeniously constructed and carefully written; and if I select for special commendation "The Case of Mr. Foggatt" and "The Stainway Cameo Mystery," I do so simply because I enjoy the poetical justice that is allotted in the one, and admire the mystification which is so perfectly sustained in the other.

WILLIAM WALLACE.

CLASSICAL BOOKS.

Plutarch's Life of Pericles. With Introduction, Critical and Explanatory Notes, and Indices by H. A. Holden. (Macmillans.) The minute care of Dr. Holden has made the scholar's library richer by an edition of Plutarch's *Pericles* which, while it will abundantly satisfy the needs of any ordinary student, will also teach him the spirit and habits of research. Dr. Holden, whose many annotated editions have already shown that he possesses the qualities most essential for a commentator, shirks no difficulty; but he often and wisely leaves the reader to find out, on clues supplied by him, how the difficulties shall be dealt with. Some of his many references are wrongly printed; but if the young student has but the patience to look up the references offered, and the numerous side-issues opened to him here, he will find himself much the wiser for the process. The edition begins with a *Life of Plutarch* which has done service before. Then we come to a useful section on Plutarch's *Life of Pericles*, its sources, and the value of its judgments. A chronological table stands next,