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recently added to his many other distinctions what may well be called the blue ribbon of the collector—the discovery of a hitherto unauthenticated masterpiece, a very beautiful portrait of Sir Thomas Moore by Holbein, long an unsuspected treasure in the collection of Mr. E. Godolphin Quicke. On one page Dr. Williamson gives admirable reproductions of this exquisite miniature, of the portrait of the artist at the age of forty-six, from Montagu House and of the remarkable likeness of Frances Howard, Countess of Surrey, that was sold last year from the Hawkins' collection to Messrs. Duveen for the record price of £2,750. The fortunate owner of this noteworthy little book has thus an opportunity of studying, side by side, three eminently characteristic examples of the subtle peculiarities pointed out by Dr. Williamson as differentiating the work of the great German master from that of any other hand.

Passing on from his enthusiastic description of these gems of miniature art, the author skilfully dissects the styles, not only of the recognised English masters of the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, together with those of some of their foreign contemporaries, but also of many comparatively little-known men, to whom he was the first to do tardy justice, in every case supplementing his text with excellent half-tone reproductions that could only be rivalled by true photogravures, amongst which, with the three Holbeins already referred to, will be specially admired the Oliver Cromwell of Samuel Cooper, the portrait of Richard Cosway by himself, that of an unknown man by Isaac Oliver and the two charming likenesses of little girls attributed to Lavinia Terlinck.

In view of the completeness of Dr. Williamson's own work, it is somewhat difficult to recognise either the necessity or the appropriateness of the supplementary chapters by Mr. Alyn Williams on "How to Paint Miniatures." The collector, for whom the book is written, is the very last person likely to wish to practise the art of miniature painting, and the professional worker will scarcely need such simple directions as are here given. The essays, at the best, embody but a one-man view of a many-sided subject, and some of the writer's remarks—his defence of stippling, for instance—will probably arouse a good deal of criticism from the modern exponents of what is once more becoming a widely practised and popular art.

NANCY BELL.

THE WINGED DESTINY. By Fiona Macleod. (Chapman and Hall. 6s.)

IN "The Winged Destiny" Miss Fiona Macleod uses once more the rather ambitious style she has been building up in her more recent books. This style has met with a good deal of admiration, and, in many passages, it has, there is no doubt, an elaborate music that can only be attained by writers with a fine ear and a good command of the vocal elements of language. Yet unfortunately, while many of the sentences she delights in are so constructed that they can only be read slowly, their form and meaning do not satisfy when dwelt on. As one reads diligently forward one comes too often on sentences or phrases like these: "The sea was a jubilation of blue and white, with green in the shaken tents of the loud-murmuring nomad host of billows. . . . A swirl of long-winged terns hung above a shoal of mackerel fry, screaming as they splashed continually into the moving dazzle . . ."

And one ends with a feeling of uneasiness and distrust instead of the peculiarly intimate sympathy which work of this kind demands. With the matter one does

not get on a great deal better. When we look into the depth of her heart for "the patterns both of time and eternity," which one of her critics has found there, we come on passages like this: "How futile all human longing, all passion of the heart, all travail of the spirit, beside this terrible reality of wind and vastness, of wind baying like a hound in a wilderness—a wilderness where the hound's voice would fall away at last, and the hound's shadow fade, and infinitude and eternity be beyond and above and behind and beneath." Words which may have profound meaning, but which, it is to be feared, will appear to many as a terrible reality of wind and vastness. The first and better part of "The Winged Destiny" consists of studies and stories which deal with the more mystical side of Highland life, and are sometimes of considerable interest. All through them, however, there is rather too much reflection, that is made up of a sort of esoteric platitude, and rather too much description, that is so nearly over-written that one grows afraid of it, as one grows afraid of a singer who is working on the limit of his compass. Besides these stories there is a collection of essays on various writers of the Irish movement and similar subjects. Some of these essays are judicious and sympathetic, and quietly written, but they have no very particular merit as contributions to criticism, and they do not show a very great surety of taste. In the whole book one sympathises most, perhaps, with the keen feeling apparent in it—beneath the details of which one cannot approve—for the islands of Scotland, other out-of-the-way places, and those who live in them.

J. M. SYNGE.

RAIDERLAND: ALL ABOUT GREY GALLOWAY. By S. R. Crockett. With Illustrations by Joseph Pennell. (Hodder & Stoughton. 6s.)

MORE completely and exclusively than Mr. Hardy has appropriated the romance of Wessex life; indeed, with something of the monopolistic hand that Mr. Barrie has laid upon the much more minute region of Thrums, Mr. Crockett has taken as his own the wild country which he names Grey Galloway. This appropriation has obtained such popular recognition that the territory is now spoken of as "The Raiders' Country," from the title of the second of the long list of Galloway romances that stand in Mr. Crockett's name. When, therefore, the literary overlord of Galloway sets himself to write a book concerning his own dominion, the reader knows that he is in the most capable of all hands. The reviewer, moreover, is allowed to become an uncritical ordinary reader, giving himself up unrestrainedly to the enjoyment of the book almost without thought of how he shall discuss it. For Mr. Crockett is "not making a guide-book, but rather a garrulous literary companion to the guide-books which already exist," with "no purpose before me save that of saying what I wish to say in my own way, acknowledging no law save my own fancy, and desiring only to give a true, if incomplete, picture of the Ancient Free Province of Galloway, specially of that more mountainous and easterly portion of it known as the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright." The result is entirely pleasing; even the predominating personal note and the tacit but unegotistic assumption that the reader is steeped in all his Galloway tales, heighten the sense of intimacy between author and reader. Besides, Mr. Crockett has much of real value to tell us, and the "Diary of an Eighteenth-Century Galloway Laird," which forms the last chapter of the book, is a really important contribution to our knowledge of the social life of Scotland just before the dawn of the nineteenth century, and "is, indeed, fitted to

correct some impressions left by the perusal of Mr. Graham's very admirable but unduly pessimistic volumes on the social life of Scotland in the eighteenth century." Mr. Crockett scatters about his pages many *obiter dicta* on Scottish literary matters, including some on the vexed question of dialect:

"What I understand to be the duty of the Scottish romancer is that he shall not attempt to represent phonetically the peculiarities of pronunciation of his chosen district, but that he shall content himself with giving the local colour, incident, character, in the noble, historical, well-authenticated Scots language, which was found sufficient for the needs of Knox, of Scott, and of Burns, to name no other names. . . . There is an idea abroad that in order to write Scottish dialect it is enough to leave out all final 'g's' and to write *dac* for *do*—which last, I beg leave to add, is the very hallmark of the bungler!"

Of the numerous drawings it need only be said that the very spirit of the region informs them and that the craftsmanship is Mr. Pennell's.

Fiction

MORGANATIC. By Max Nordau. Translated by Elizabeth Lee. (Chatto & Windus, 6s.) The excursions of celebrated savants into fiction are apt at first sight to seem unpromising. Herr Nordau, however, in spite of a conspicuous absence of artistic feeling and a lack of any high literary pretensions, has succeeded in writing an unusually interesting book. He is no artist, but his scientific career has taught him how to analyse and to write with vigour and succinctness. He has, in fact, the qualities of his defects. The hard and metallic character of the style which as a rule refrains from comment and leaves individuals and events to speak for themselves, his very coldness and absence of enthusiasm serve, at any rate, as an unimpeachable guarantee of his accuracy and sincerity. The characters with one exception are neither deep nor romantic, but have evidently been picked off from the life, and impress us with their reality. The scene is laid in the literary and journalistic circles of Paris, of which Herr Nordau can speak with first-hand authority, and in the Courts of foreign principalities. Particularly excellent are the satiric sketches of the Baroness von Gronendal, morganatic wife of the Prince of Meissen-Lowenstein-Franka, at bottom sensible and good-hearted, but driven into meanness and absurdity by her snobbish wish to assert her very dubious rights, and of her son Siegfried, who, in spite of his fundamental weakness, shows some elements of character, and hovers perpetually on the borderland of good sense and folly. The sketch of General Boulanger as General Ménard is interesting, but by far the best piece of work in the book is the character of the heroine, Nicoline Flammert, the natural daughter of a German prince. She is beautiful, high-spirited, ambitious and self-confident, and her unaffected freedom of thought and action cannot fail to make a conquest of the reader, especially in the instance in which she coerces her father into marrying her mother. On the other hand, Mr. Gray, the American millionaire who marries Nicoline, is too much of a *deus ex machina* to be in the least convincing. The translation is excellent, but the story would be improved by being considerably shortened.

THE SILENT WOMAN. By "Rita." (Hutchinson, 6s.) Having given in "Souls" the *coup de grâce* to modern society, "Rita" has in her latest novel transferred her attention from the boudoirs of Mayfair to the moors and dales of Derbyshire. "The Silent Woman" is a tolerably good piece of melodrama. The book has, of course, many of those literary faults which constitute the very essence of all effective sensationalism. It abounds in high-flown platitudes on the philosophy of life, and in those coincidences and im-

probabilities that strike one as positively inevitable in books of this description. Rufus Myrthe, the hero, a healthy, primitive, young American, comes over to England to establish his claim to a family estate. He discovers a cousin in the person of Moll Udale, the beautiful though untrained daughter of a boorish innkeeper, and after placing her at a school in a country town takes up his residence in the boarding-house and sanatorium of a Dr. Quarn, a stereotyped villain of the orthodox Adelphi pattern, "who had left the epitaph of 'Victim' on many a dishonoured grave." Myrthe finds that the doctor is poisoning his wife. Through chagrin at the discovery of his plot and the recovery of his wife Quarn takes an overdose of laudanum, and is found dead with marks of strangulation on his throat. Appearances point to the hero as the murderer, but a mysterious dwarf, named Japes, is proved to have throttled the already dead man in revenge for some previous injury, and Myrthe marries his enemy's wife. The novel gives the impression of having been written straight off the reel, without any definite preconceived plot. Several mysteries are hinted at, but the veil is never lifted; in fact, "Rita" seems to have started with more material than she knew how to utilise.

ALIENS OF THE WEST. By the author of "The Rejuvenation of Miss Semaphore." (Cassell, 6s.) Here is a book which does for an Irish country town what Miss Mitford did for an English village in "Our Village." It is a faithful presentment of Irish life given without favour and without prejudice; a curiously lifelike and level-headed study, which might assist some of our well-meaning but uncomprehending statesmen in their meditations on the perennial "Irish Question." In its way the book is a masterpiece because of the perfection of the sketches in detail and form of expression. There is dry humour and simple, human pathos in each separate story. Could England, we wonder, produce a servant of the class of Miss Kinahan's Kate, with her record of unpaid service, her devotion and her respect for her poverty-stricken mistress's pride? Much of another story, "The Wind Bloweth where it Listeth," constitutes a prose poem in itself, and is a fitting medium for the exposition of the dreams and fancies which make up the short life of poor little Denis, the cripple boy with the soul of a poet. Denis saw grand things in the clouds he watched from his narrow window and had he lived he might have made others see them too. . . . "The sky at Toomevara was so much more wonderful than the earth, but no one seemed to notice it except himself." . . . In another story, "King William," the feud between Catholic and Orangeman is dealt with, with an absolute absence of partisan or bitter feeling.

PROVINCIAL TALES. By Gertrude H. Bone. (Duckworth, 6s.) These stories remind us a little of "Zack's" early work. They have somewhat the same ruggedness and strength, as well as other arresting qualities of their own. In the preface the writer says that the poor, "under the pressure of bewildering circumstance or strong passion, find for themselves an expression as nearly as possible derived from their actual sensations, and thus they often . . . attain in the communication of their deepest feeling to a dignified and moving language to be sought for in vain among people of an easier speech." From this it will be gathered that the stories deal with the very poor, and are sometimes mere moving incidents, as is "The Right Eye" or the culmination of slowly growing tragedy, as in "The Mother." All the ten sketches are striking. The writer evidently has that sympathy which gives a keen insight into the lives and emotions of the poor. She has chosen to dwell on the pathos of poverty, depicting the sad side of the life that the poor lead rather than any humorous aspect. One of the cleverest tales is that entitled "The Mother." Ann Butterworth, the wife of a bully and mother of seven children, rents a small farm from a woman who had once in her girlhood been her friend. She is an untidy slattern, slaving from morning till night to feed the seven hungry mouths. "She paid the utmost she had to give, but it was not the price required." She receives notice to quit the neglected