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THE ATHENÆUM

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of them. His hero, Angus Glenrae, seeks in the East to restore the fallen fortunes of his house, is taken prisoner by Arabs, performs wonders with bagpipes and seidlitz powders, wades through blood, escapes a thousand dangers, and returns to marry the girl he left behind him. It is fairly evident under whose influence Mr. Steuart has acquired the art of romance-weaving; yet he is by no means content to imitate his teachers.

The Eccentrics. By Percy Ross. 3 vols. (Digby, Long & Co.)

MR. ROSS might well have dispensed with the final letter of his title, for his plot and construction, as well as his characters, are all eccentric together. He has some imagination and more courage, and might have turned them both to better account if he had combined them with a greater measure of self-restraint. The title of the book is probably intended to warn its readers that it deals with extraordinary human types, acting in an extraordinary manner. Very good stories may be written on such a basis, so long as the eccentricity has a method in it and is definite of its kind. But the reader gets no conviction, and very little illusion, out of men and women who act as eccentrics as Mr. Ross makes his characters act. There are patches of colour throughout these three volumes, but there is not much consistency of tone in the narrative as a whole.

Dr. Endicott's Experiment. By Adeline Sergeant. 2 vols. (Chatto & Windus.)

THE conflict between professional ambition and personal feeling forms the mainspring of Miss Sergeant's latest and in some ways her most sensational novel. The great situation in the churchyard is, so far as we know, entirely original, and, if it were not so ludicrously grotesque, would be exceedingly gruesome. However, Miss Sergeant preserves her gravity, and, while exhibiting a merciful reticence in regard to Dr. Endicott's experiments, is as alert and animated and artificial as ever in her handling of incident and dialogue. We miss the supple, olive-hued, treacherous adventurer of mixed foreign extraction who figures in so many of Miss Sergeant's previous novels, but he has certainly earned a brief rest.

A Tragic Honeymoon. By Alan St. Aubyn. 2 vols. (White & Co.)

MR. ST. AUBYN's successive productions are unfortunately not marked by increasing merit. He too constantly harps on the dreary topic of women intent on matrimony, and planning constantly to attain that state. Here the reader gets thoroughly tired of the family of sisters all talking of nothing but their own or their sisters' marriage, and the vulgarity with which they do it has no redeeming touch of humour or pathos to render it tolerable. The end of the book is singularly weak and ineffective, as the reader is left rather in the dark as to what really happened; while the catastrophe which gives its title to the book is incongruous and ludicrous from the improbability of the husband's taking such violent measures with himself. The curate, Douglas Craik, is the most sympathetic person in the book, but

even in him, perhaps because of his environment, the interest is not vast. It is a pity that Mr. St. Aubyn should give his name to such dull work as this, since he showed in one of his earliest books, 'The Old Maid's Sweetheart,' that he is capable of better things.

Grandborough. By the Earl of Desart. 2 vols. (Chapman & Hall.)

THE Earl of Desart's story has to do with society black sheep and others—two divorced persons, one of them an intending and the other an actual murderer; their daughter, all but an actual murderer; the Rev. Sebastian Grantley, a knave and swindler; a swindling American; and sundry young suitors of the aforesaid daughter, who make off when her father has remarried and begotten an heir. These are practically all the characters, and, of course, we have to sympathize with some of them; but the facts are as stated, so that sympathy can hardly be said to find a comfortable niche. There is a free employment of social interest and intrigue, for any one who is not too dainty over such things. Indeed, the story may be called interesting as a whole, though one would be glad to consider that it is not fairly representative of any section of English social life.

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

MR. CLARK RUSSELL's last story is not so well constructed as some of his earlier ones have been. The narrator is supposed to be an old woman who had been taken to sea when she was a young girl, yet her language throughout is that of a finished sailor, knowing every technical term, and relating every idle detail of the voyage as though she were writing her log from day to day. So far as her personality is concerned, all is artificial and impossible; but the tale itself is a stirring account of villainy on the high seas. The central incident is the picking up of twelve men in an open boat, who turn out to be pirates; and, as it had been arranged that they should be so picked up before the Mohock left England, the reader will perceive that Mr. Clark Russell has his work cut out for him to make his incidents square with probability. It must be admitted, however, that this book contains a good deal of the charm which its author has led his admirers to expect from him.

A New Note. 2 vols. (Hutchinson & Co.)

THE late lamented Hans von Bülow, who once remarked that a tenor was "not a man, but a disease," would have rejoiced in the delineation, so entirely after his own heart, of Mr. Loevio, the singing gentleman who figures so prominently in 'A New Note.' The expectations which the title arouses, so far as music is concerned, are amply fulfilled. There is a great deal about that divine art in this cleverly written novel, though it is by no means calculated to enhance the respect felt for its practitioners. But the epithet "new" excites anticipations which many readers will find agreeably disappointed. They will resent the notion that a girl so refined, so attractive, and so distinguished as the heroine should have

ever been capable of preferring an odiously underbred charlatan to an honourable gentleman like Jerry Annesley, but they will welcome her tardy return to sanity in the light of a tribute to the perception of a sex chiefly maligned by its representatives. The book is written with considerable alertness of style, and the sketches of the old maiden aunt and half a dozen other minor characters, including an admirable cat, are touched off with no little skill and humour.

Lesser's Daughter. By Mrs. Andrew Dean. "Pseudonym Library." (Fisher Unwin.)

AMONGST the recent additions to the "Pseudonym Library" there have been few, if any, studies of character superior in delicacy and sympathy to that of Lesser Bremen, the luckless and pathetic central figure of "Mrs. Andrew Dean's" very clever romance. The materials are at first sight unpromising, but they are handled with rare skill and discretion, and the story marches to its tragic close with an inevitableness in striking contrast to the gratuitous misery of so many modern novels. The picture of this wealthy but insignificant little Jew, a stranger in his own home, and unable to win the affection of his own child until the moment of his death, is really masterly; and the heartless wife and her shallow daughter are hardly less vividly drawn. 'Lesser's Daughter' reveals an aspect of the Jew in mixed marriage which has hitherto escaped the attention of his numerous delineators; it is an exceedingly interesting aspect, and it is treated with signal sympathy and success.

The Lilac Sunbonnet. By S. R. Crockett. (Fisher Unwin.)

TO readers who saw both accomplishment and promise in 'The Stickit Minister' and 'The Raiders,' the author's new volume must prove disappointing. 'The Lilac Sunbonnet' contains the idea and some of the materials of a beautiful rustic idyl; not a little humour; not a little pathos; not a little poetry; but all is rendered ineffective, and even irritating, by hasty and loose construction. As a story the book is quite amorphous, while some of its episodes, excellent in themselves, are all but thrown away for want of harmonious setting. Others are poor stuff, and of these, one which occupies a whole chapter—"The Cuif before the Session"—possesses neither relevance nor originality. The painful lack of coherence in the book is largely accounted for by the fact that the story is grounded on the mystery supposed to hang round the parentage of the heroine, a secret which must have been open not merely to all parties directly concerned, but to the whole contemporary population of Galloway. The heroine is a graceful figure, but she is an anachronism. She has "Englishy ways" and speaks the finest of English, because she had spent her early childhood with a small Scottish farmer settled in Cumberland. She is mistress of a considerable household and farm, and cultivates the most delicate sentiments, yet, when the season of blanket-washing comes round, she "kilts her coats" and shares the "tramping" with her servant-lasses. Her grandmother, too, is a graceful figure; but she also is an anachronism at many points. At the age of sixty-eight she reads 'The

Fortunes of Nigel' hot from Ballantyne's press (1822), and regales us with stories of girlish flirtations with cavalry officers still youthful, though they had distinguished themselves at Fontenoy (1745). Mr. Crockett owes it both to himself and to the large body of readers in whose breasts he had raised expectations to do justice to his unquestionable abilities by taking some pains with his next book.

Tempest-Torn. By Lieut.-Col. Andrew Haggard, D.S.O. (Hutchinson & Co.)

THE shattered pine which decks the cover of Col. Haggard's volume is typical of the rash soldier who ventures to be too dark and beautiful, and to make love to two ladies at once. Indeed, Claude Wentworth, whose tragic fate is here set forth, is handicapped at the outset by a more or less legitimate connexion with a third lady. But the *prima donna* has left him before he complicates his fortunes by paying his addresses to a fascinating grass widow. In his perplexity on the reappearance of Madalena at Malta he is not without the advice and assistance of a thoroughgoing friend. Says the excellent Judson (3rd Sikhs):—

"Look here, old boy.....a mouse can help a lion, they say, and therefore, if you like, I'll try and help you, only you must also help yourself. You just make a clean bolt of it with your Mrs. Farquhar, while I stay here and make love to this pretty actress woman, make myself awfully seductive, marry her, she commits bigamy, and there you are, rid of her for life!"

"Judson's little plan" turns out more nearly effective than might be supposed from its crude enunciation. But no reader who is acquainted with the imaginative powers of the Haggards will doubt that many an obstacle will be interposed in the course of these pages. The resuscitation of one of the heroines after apparent death by poison, "mowhelow" to wit, the antidote whereto has been supplied by an Indian member of the great "Gnostic Brotherhood"; the gallant conduct of the *prima donna*, who earns a V.C. in the character of a drummer boy; and the transfusion of blood from the veins of Lady Gladys to those of the wounded hero, with the results of that experiment on the hearts of the patients, are only some of the incidents with which these pages abound. A more individual characteristic of the writer is the gift of observation which informs such chapters as that on "An Indian Station in Winter" and the other on "Turmoil among the Mountains." Against this merit must be set a pestilent and unnatural habit of thinking aloud on the part of the actors, and on the author's a considerable want of finish and some stumbling at the elements of style. To "examine with the greatest minutia," to "inculcate" a person "into" ways, are errors of the lower forms at school; while, probably from carelessness in proof-reading, there are not a few printers' errors.

La Chevelure de Madeleine. Par Jean Rameau. (Paris, Ollendorff.)

THE author of 'La Chevelure de Madeleine' has written four volumes of poems and many novels, but his name is not much known in England. His present novel deserves to find readers even on this side

the Channel, and it is to be hoped that they will avoid a natural tendency to "skip scenery" for story, and will note, in the mazes of a complicated tale of modern sham witchcraft and of murder, the exquisite pictures of the Pyrenees drawn by one who loves those abrupt mountains. 'La Chevelure de Madeleine' is the story of a boy and girl who, whatever else they may be or may become, at least know how to love. It is not quite what would have been a "young lady's novel" once, but, comparatively speaking, may be looked upon as a "young lady's novel" of these later days.

FAIRY TALES.

Fairy Stories from Grimm. By S. Baring-Gould. (Wells Gardner & Co.)—Mr. Baring-Gould has picked out forty-four of the two hundred of the 'Kinder- und Hausmärchen,' and has sent them forth with all the advantages of good paper, printing, illustrations, and a very able and interesting preface: although we rather fail to see the connexion between the preface and the book; for in the preface the stories are taken very seriously and have learned things said about them, but when we come to examine them, we find that in some of them Mr. Baring-Gould has allowed himself much licence as regards excision, and disdained accuracy of translation. If they are folk-tales and worthy of a learned preface (and that we know them to be), they ought to have been left in the exact form in which they came from the pen of the brothers Grimm. Mr. Baring-Gould may say that they have been altered to suit youth, which must not be brought into such direct contact with the Devil as that to which the Grimms saw fit to expose their readers, to which we say: "Well and good, only, if that be the case, the preface might have been omitted; for 'The Giant with the Golden Hairs' and 'The Evil Spirit and his Grandmother' do not appear in the old folk-tales, but the Devil does, and we do not imagine that the juvenile mind receives more harm from him than from Mr. Baring-Gould's substitutes." The stories are all pleasantly translated, though occasionally a little more accuracy might have been shown. 'The Fisherman and his Wife' is one which has been much altered. It is told in the Pomeranian dialect, which may have presented some difficulties. "'I,' said de Fru, 'du haddst em doch fungen, und heddest em wedder swimmen laten, he dait dat gewiss,'" does not mean "You must catch him again, and before you let him swim away he will grant what you ask"; and "de See wöör goor nich meer so blank," does not mean "the sea was still more blank," but "no longer so calm." The fish bestows a cottage on the fisherman,—

"Un achter was ook en lüttjen Hof mit Höörn un Aanten, un en lüttjen Goorn mit Grönzkelten un Aaft. 'Süh,' said de Fru, 'is dat nich nett?' 'Ja,' said de Mann, 'so schall't biywen, un wähl wir recht vergnügt lewen,'" which being interpreted means:—

"Behind the cottage was a small yard—with hens and ducks, and a small garden with greens and fruit. 'Look,' said the wife, 'isn't this nice?' 'Yes,' said the man, 'and so we will always think it, and be content with it.'"

This is translated:—

"At the back was a large yard, with hens and chickens, as well as a nice garden, full of fruit trees and vegetables. 'See,' said the wife, 'is not this charming?' 'Yes,' said her husband, 'so long as it blooms you will be very well content with it.'"

We own that there is an odd suggestion of "blowing and growing" about *blywen*, the Pomeranian form of *bleiben*; but it is a mistake which should not have occurred. The translator misses a point, too, by making the wife wish to be queen. In the original she wished to be king, and saw no incongruity. The fish sees none either; she becomes king, and then em-

peror; but Mr. Baring-Gould cuts out that part in his story.

More Celtic Fairy Tales. By Joseph Jacobs. (Nutt.)—It is with regret that we learn that for some time to come Mr. Jacobs will not present the children of the British Isles with another selection from the fairy tales still existing among them. We can ill do without these pretty, compact, beautifully illustrated books, which give good stories in good form and tell what is known about them. The crop of English stories has long been scanty, but Scotland will doubtless still repay the collector, and the publication of Mr. Larminie's delightful 'West Irish Folk-Tales' has shown us what Ireland can be made to yield. It is hard, however, to assign certain stories to any particular country. When a story is told in Norway that in nearly all its incidents is all but the same as one that is told in Ireland and in the Western Highlands, in which of the three countries may the story be said to be at home? 'Jack the Cunning Thief' is a case in point. He can scarcely be allowed to claim a home in the British Isles, because his adventures are so much better told by Asbjörnsen; and no sooner is that established in our minds than again Jack has to move on, because Mr. Clouston and others have found reason to connect him with King Rampsinites. The story of 'The Russet Dog' is excellent, but not a little distressing to those who want the old tales without alteration or combination or recombination, for it shows how easily the thing can be done. Recombination is, indeed, a very subtle method of offering, not "new lamps for old ones," as in 'Aladdin,' but "new old stories" for old ones. 'The Russet Dog,' i. e., the fox, is made up out of several fables and pre-existing stories. Mr. Jacobs's note to 'The Legend of Knockgratton' is interesting. The story is taken from O'Roker's 'Fairy Legends of the South of Ireland.' "Parnell's poem 'Edwin and Sir Topaz' [we quote Mr. Jacobs] contains the same story. As he was born in Dublin, 1679, this traces the tale back at least two hundred years in Ireland. Practically the same story, however, has been found in Japan and translated into English under the title 'Kobutori; or, the Old Man and the Devils.'"

A Farm in Fairyland. By Laurence Housman. (Kegan Paul & Co.)—We have seldom read stories which have afforded us more pleasure than the first five in this book. They are written with strong poetical feeling, and show much lively fancy—or we might say imagination—and a warm love of birds, beasts, and flowers. Besides this they are original. We do not like the rest of the stories so much, but the five good ones are possessions in themselves.

PHILOLOGICAL BOOKS.

It was a happy and judicious choice on the part of Messrs. Kegan Paul & Co., the publishers of the "International Scientific Series," when they entrusted the subject of *Race and Language* to Prof. A. Lefèvre, of the Anthropological School, Paris, who has produced a manual creditable alike for the independence of research of which it is the outcome, and for the lucidity of exposition which brings that research home to the cultured reader. The 424 pages of which this book consists contain a mass of well-arranged and well-digested information which the reader may not easily find within such a small compass in any other work. The author is not, it is pleasant to note, a believer in the decadence of language; he rather sees "in the thousand phonetic substitutions and modifications adaptations of speech to the temperament of the various peoples, and to the growing complexity of intellectual needs." After an introductory essay on the evolution of language, the bulk of the volume deals with the geographical distribution of languages and races. Here the author keeps distinctly apart the