

their lives are dull tragedies. (Messrs. Small, Maynard and Company.)

Mr. Leonard Merrick has added to his list of six or seven novels a very readable story entitled *The Worldlings*.

It is the story of a man's duplicity and a man's love. Maurice Blake, at forty, found himself stranded in South Africa, when a peculiar temptation came to him. This temptation resulted in his return to England as the son of Sir Noel Jardine, who had left home many years before, and who had died out in the gold fields. The woman who had lived with Philip Jardine as his wife was the temptress, and she was to share in the profits of the daring scheme. So Maurice Blake became Philip Jardine, a member of London's most exclusive set, and no one would have been the wiser had not love for a woman stepped in. Then his conscience awakens, and for a time crushes him. But love conquers. He marries the woman, and the deceit is carried on. Just what part the temptress plays in the game and just how the story ends are points which shall not be revealed here. Mr. Merrick writes well, and his worldly wisdom is admirably displayed in the following conversation which a wise mother has with her daughter:

Close your eyes; the contented woman is the woman who doesn't see too much. Love isn't blind, because there's no love without jealousy, and jealousy's an Argus; but contentment is! . . .

We oughtn't to judge our husbands from our own standpoint. . . . We are better than men are in big things—we fib more, and we're ruder; but, on the whole, we are better, even in our sins. A woman has to fancy herself in love with another man before she deceives her husband; but a man can run after other women while he knows he loves his wife. . . . The woman who refuses to believe her husband loves her simply because she discovers him to be inconstant only understands her own nature. . . .

She doesn't understand men's. And such as it is, it's what we ought to judge them by. They are the slaves of their impulses, to use a pretty word; their point of view is totally different from ours—they can't see what we have to make such a fuss about. Many a man who deceives his wife without the slightest compunction would go through fire and water

to save her a grief he understood. My dear child, don't let us forget that if men had self-control, most women would die old maids!

(Messrs. Doubleday, Page and Company.)

The Love of Landry, by Paul Laurence Dunbar, is evidently the result of the author's trip to Colorado, where he was ob-

liged to stay for a time on account of ill-health. The scene of this little story is on a ranch in Colorado, where Mildred Osborne, a New York girl, goes with her father by order of her physician. The plot is a slight one, and the reader must be satisfied with the love interest. Landry is a wealthy Philadelphian who, because of a sorry experience at home, abhors civilisation and seeks the wide plains of the West, where he masquerades as a cow-puncher. That he falls in love with Mildred goes without saying. She treats him somewhat as an inferior, for Mr. Dunbar says "there is in every woman a bit of the snob." But Landry takes his snubbing rather cheerfully, and in the end everything turns out satisfactorily. In the meantime he airs his views on life generally. In a cynical moment he says: "Nothing is quite so conceited as what we call civilisation; and what does it mean, after all, except to lie gracefully, to cheat legally, and to live as far away from God and Nature as the world limit will let." It is quite natural that Mr. Dunbar should have certain limitations when he endeavours to portray the character of those not of his own race. His dialogue is stilted, and the following conversation between the father and daughter reminds one of a child's catechism:

"What—what do they do with so much corn, papa?" she asked.

"They bring down prices with so much corn," he answered grimly.

"Yes, but what else do they do with it? Surely it has some other use besides that?"

"It has. They eat it, they feed it to their stock, they mill it, and they corner it."

There is pathos in the following passage, especially when one remembers why it is that so many young men and women are obliged to seek a home in the West;

With all the faith one may have in one's self, with all the strong hopefulness of youth, it is yet a terrible thing to be forced away from home, from all one loves, to an unknown, uncared-for country, there to fight, hand to hand with death, an uncertain fight. There is none of the rush and clamour of battle that keeps up the soldier's courage. There is no clang of the instruments of war. The panting warrior hears no loud huzzas, and yet the deadly combat goes on; in the still night, when all the world's asleep, in the grey day, in the pale morning, it goes on, and no one knows it save himself and death. Then if he go down, he knows no hero's honours; if he win, he has no special praise. And yet, it is a terrible lone, still fight.

(Messrs. Dodd, Mead and Company.)

A Woman of Yesterday, by Caroline

"A Woman of Yesterday."

A. Mason, should be classed with the religious novels. It is a conscientious and painstaking piece of work, but by far too morbid and melancholy to please the popular fancy. Mrs. Mason has portrayed the American woman of forty or fifty years ago, who has been brought up in a narrow and deeply religious environment. Anna Mallison is her name, and her cold and passionless perfection gets on one's nerves. She is imbued with the missionary spirit, and she marries a man in order to go with him to India, where they are both to do missionary work. The man breaks down in health on the eve of their marriage, and India is out of the question for all time. They are married, however, and Anna grieves in secret over the frustration of her plans. There is page after page of analysis of her religious nature, which is dull reading, and then comes some action when she and her husband give up their money and their position to join a visionary idealist in a Quixotic scheme. This idealist, who is described as a powerfully magnetic person and a leader of men, founds a town on the co-operative system, which he calls Fraternia. The scheme fails. The husband dies as the result of the hardships which he is obliged to undergo, and Anna goes on in her perfect way—which to our mind is a blind and stupid way. Such a woman in real life would not interest us for a moment. Therefore, why let fiction per-

petuate her? (Messrs. Doubleday, Page and Company.)

Those who remember S. Weir Mitchell's *Characteristics* will like *Dr. North and His Friends*, for the person-

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ages of the former reappear with others, and they talk more than ever, talk quite as pleasantly, and their manners have not in the least disimproved. They are all so intelligent and well-read and well-mannered and comfortably circumstanced that it is a great privilege to be in their company for nearly five hundred pages. True, there is a millionaire bouncer brought in by way of contrast, but he makes few inroads into the polite conversation; and there is a girl who has not always known comfort and culture; but she picks up the prevailing accent of refinement very quickly. It ought to be dull—and the personages are rather prim in an intellectual way—but it isn't dull. It is very nice reading. (The Macmillan Company.)

Charming Renée is a good old English melodramatic novel of the sort that one usually finds between paper covers. It is written by

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one Arabella Kenealy, who uses with a free hand a wofully hackneyed plot. She becomes so interested in the telling of her story that she speaks of the heroine as being but five feet tall, on one page, and then on the next she describes her unusual height. She also fails to explain several important features of the mystery. However, she makes up for these little slips in other ways. Renée, a young English girl just fresh from school, marries an Englishman of noble birth, who is painted in sombre and mysterious colours. He lives a hermit's life as the result of some awful tragedy in his youth, and the book is full of murder, insanity and other necessary melodramatic material. There is a "villainess" in the story, too, who has a wicked squint in one eye and a mole near her mouth, which is described as particularly fascinating. She tears her hair and storms around generally, of course upsetting any possibility of happiness between Renée and her husband, who in some inexplicable way stands in mortal terror of the squint and the mole. The whole book is cheap