

I can only regret the lack of space to illustrate the rich garment of art in which this theme is clothed. I should like to speak of the vivid and beautiful pictures of the relations of Matey and her children, of that quiet Quaker home in the Hudson Valley, and especially of that deep-hearted compassion and understanding which are everywhere apparent. The book is pervaded by an atmosphere of deep repose, whimsical and mellow humor, and an engaging sanity and health of spirit.

HARRY HAYDEN CLARK

THE REDLAKES by *Francis Brett Young*
(HARPERS. \$3.00)

LIKE Shakespeare's Feste, Mr. Brett Young has a mellifluous voice. In *The Redlakes* he consistently refuses to write anything but beautiful English; and with the exception—one might almost say the intrusion—of one piece of vigorous and sustained narrative, he consistently refuses to look any fact squarely in the face. So that, as with his earlier *Portrait of Claire*, though his story has much to do with bitterness and pain, we get little but pleasure out of it—Mr. Brett Young has such an easy way with him.

Jim Redlake was the son of a brilliant novelist and a gentle, ill-treated lady; he was left to the care of his grandparents; adored by his grandfather and hated by his grandmother; he was driven by an immature love affair and his grandfather's death to find his maturity in Africa, and specifically in the Smuts-Von Lettow Vorbeck campaign; and returned to England to marry the gentle daughter of a clergyman who had once been his tutor. Through Jim and his family Mr. Brett Young offers a picture of hunting society in Leicestershire from the beginning of the century to the end of the Great War. Somehow the whole thing appears to be a little too familiar, and circumstances, even when they are as wealthy and well managed as they are here, do not alter cases. Obvi-

ously Mr. Brett Young deserves to sell his six hundred pages, because he is a very capable novelist.

But he *ought* to be a great one. The beauty of his English in general and his account of the Smuts campaign in particular (a very distinguished, very direct, and very moving piece of work) are quite beyond a merely capable writer. But otherwise he manages his "crowded canvas" through the simplest and easiest kind of massing; he sets off the noble by the gentle and the gentle by the simple; he puts the sheep on one side and the goats on the other; his characters, like the periods in an academic scheme of prose, do nothing which is likely to endanger the balance of the story. The blood of this novel runs slowly, even fitfully—there is something lazy and sick about it. One does not like to accuse Mr. Brett Young of spiritual idleness; but, however one tries to get round it, for a man with such obvious powers as he has, it can be this, and this only, which has kept him from the front rank of English novelists.

THE CONFLICT by *E. E. Kellett* (SMITH.
\$3.00)

MR. KELLETT tells the story of the quarrel between Egfrith, King of Northumbria and Wilfrid, Bishop of York, later to be canonized as one of the Northumbrian saints. It is a story not unlike that of Henry II and Becket, except that it is the king who suffers in the end; for the curse of Wilfrid, whom he has deprived of two sees, pursues him through the religious withdrawal of one wife, the sterility of another, the death of his brother and his best friend, down to his own death at the hands of the heathen far north in Scotland.

Mr. Kellett is no mean novelist; he knows how to make the most out of the opposition of two strong characters; and, though he has a wide knowledge of his period, he does not allow this knowledge to clog or divert his narrative. It is perhaps a pity that he should

have committed his characters to such involved and unwieldy dialogue; there would actually have been more reality in the story if the characters had expressed themselves in a plain, unidiomatic English, and if Mr. Kelllett's astonishingly rich and authentic detail had been allowed to speak for itself.

"SIR!" SHE SAID by Alec Waugh (FARRAR & RINEHART. \$1.00)

IT is somewhat surprising that a writer of Mr. Waugh's talents should have descended not once or twice into the dusty arena known as the Problem Of The Modern Girl; but here he is again, apparently quite content. He tells the story of two sisters, one flighty and pretty and very young, the other sober and somewhat older. The elder sister "sins" and the younger marries respectably; and it all happens in a London which is very nearly the real thing, inhabited by very nearly the real people—"very nearly" being the yawning gulf which is fixed between a good novel and a fair story. Mr. Waugh raises a dollar's worth of dust; but if he has anything really serious to say about the modern girl, he should try an earlier style. He seems to have forgotten that quite a number of people found courage and sincerity and at least the intimations of important writing in *The Loom of Youth*.

GEORGE DANGERFIELD

WOMAN UNDER GLASS by Virginia Hersch (HARPERS. \$2.50)

THIS is a biography of St. Teresa de Ávila in the form of a novel. With an agreeable historical fidelity Miss Hersch, who recently novelized the life of El Greco under the title *Bird of God*, has been content to trace over the line of her heroine's career and to take almost no liberties with it. A great many of the speeches of St. Teresa, of St. John of the Cross, and others, are simply copied from their writings. For this reason, as well as be-

cause Miss Hersch writes competently, in a pseudo-poetic manner which is unobtrusive enough, one experiences no difficulty in reading what she has written. At times she is graceful, at times acute. She seems capable simultaneously of detachment and reverence.

Why, then, does *Woman under Glass* convey to the reader so little? Why does it leave him with less of an impression of St. Teresa than he would receive from the barest account in a *Lives of the Saints*? It must be because Miss Hersch has essayed an art-form and has in no way been successful. If one looks closely at her work one detects a deplorable confusion of styles. She borrows but she makes no attempt to assimilate. Here she has drawn upon impressionist criticism, here upon imagist poetry—and here upon the movies! Nothing is passed through a common crucible, nothing is created. And what an author fails to create a reader fails to retain. In the end we realize that even her historical fidelity is not a virtue; it is but the sign of her failure, disclosing *why* she was content to copy. *Woman under Glass* is not a new portrait of St. Teresa; it is a mere tracing with modern embellishments.

UNHAPPY WIND by Nelson Antrim Crawford (COWARD-MCCANN. \$2.50)

FEW readers of this second novel by the author of *A Man of Learning* will fail to observe that it was written in the shadow of Mr. James Joyce's *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. There is a constant similarity to the experiences of Stephen Dedalus, Mr. Joyce's protagonist, not only in what Winfrid Cartwright, Mr. Crawford's protagonist, sees and hears, but in what he feels as well. *Unhappy Wind*, moreover, does not wander from the path established by Mr. Joyce in what it relates of a life from early childhood to early manhood; and the soul of Winfrid, like the soul of Stephen, is made the battleground of sex and religion. Winfrid is an unusually sensitive boy, not appreciated by his