

out his guiding hand, it is quite possible, as Mr. Stewart charges, that Mrs. Hawthorne went farther than necessary in altering what she considered inaccuracies and awkwardnesses from the long detailed notes which Hawthorne had kept all his life, in this country and abroad; and it is even obvious that occasionally she deleted what was not so much incorrect as idiosyncratic. But surely it is going too far to represent her as a dismal prig. The text of the book's jacket illustrates the total effect of Mr. Stewart's comments when it speaks—doubtless in order to capitalize on the vogue set by Van Wyck Brooks's study of Mark Twain—of Mrs. Hawthorne's "extensive and prudish revisions".

A little comprehension of Mrs. Hawthorne's position at the time when the notebooks were first made public property might call forth more human charity than she has been accorded here or in previous books about the greatest of American writers. Her children were still young, and had their lives to lead, great man or no great man. She herself knew how completely Hawthorne had relied on her taste and judgement. He was not, at that time, removed from the company of his fellows by the perspectives of time and admitted genius. She gave, honestly and generously, what she believed best represented Hawthorne as he would care to be represented. If her judgement was fallible it is possible that subsequent judgements are no less so. We can be, and are, deeply grateful to those who return to the heritage of manuscripts left to us by genius after the immediate human situation has been altered by the passage of years; of such records, as complete and outspoken as possible, we can hardly have enough. But we have had considerably too much, particularly in recent years, of insinuations, outright charges, or shrieking challenges that the wives, friends, and chil-

dren of great men engage in mean-spirited and prudish conspiracies for the sole purpose of presenting them in the light of genteel drawing-room heroes.

### *Kenneth Grahame*

MR. CLAYTON HAMILTON's tribute to the late Kenneth Grahame, printed elsewhere in this issue, appears just as Mr. Grahame's countrymen have collected in one volume three of his best loved stories. The volume is called *The Kenneth Grahame Book* (Methuen), and contains *The Golden Age*, *Dream Days*, and *The Wind in the Willows*. It will undoubtedly appear in this country before many months have passed. Also, Putnam's are publishing here next month, in modernized form, an anthology of children's poetry which Grahame edited seventeen years ago—*The Cambridge Book of Children's Verse*.

### *The Bookman's Literary Portraits*

MANY of the early letters commenting on the CHRISTMAS BOOKMAN contain requests for individual copies of the photographs of writers which appeared in our Christmas Portfolio of Literary Portraits. In reproducing in this issue by a new aquatone process a portfolio of four of Georges Schreiber's drawings of authors, we have therefore arranged to have on hand a sufficient supply of single copies of each portrait to meet such requests. Details of how they may be procured will be found in an announcement in our advertising columns. Mr. Schreiber, who will have four more drawings in the February number of THE BOOKMAN, is a young German artist who now makes his home in New York. Several of the portraits

which we reproduce were done during a special trip abroad which he made last summer; all are done from life and are signed by the sitter.

### Mr. Chesterton Slips

WE YIELD to no one in admiration for G. K. Chesterton. As his three, four, and sometimes five weekly articles stream from the presses, not to speak of the steady succession of solid books like his *Chaucer*, we are wont to exclaim that never before could there have been such an inexhaustible fountain of insight clothed in magnificent language. But we feel constrained to point out some strange lapses in a recent article of Chesterton's commenting on Dorothea Brande's review of Edith Wharton's *The Gods Arrive* in the October *BOOKMAN*. One would have thought that Chesterton, always the battler for neglected truths and the assailant of cant and confusion, could find plenty of enemies in the spacious modern world without being tempted to twist harmless words into the semblance of hostility to a worthy cause. But worse than that, he was led by his initial error to betray the cause itself by a defence nothing less than absurd.

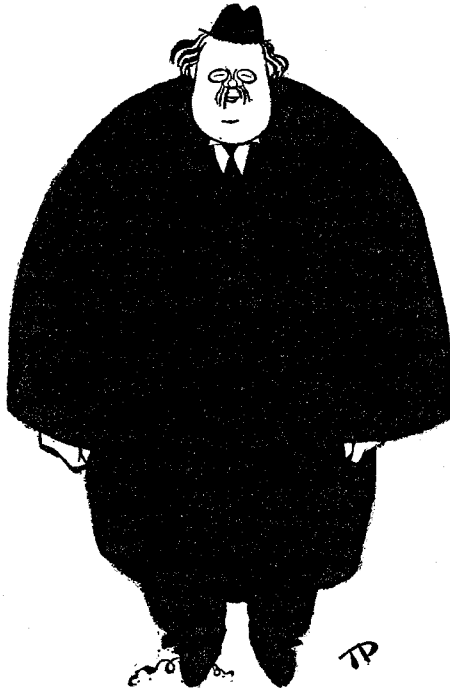
Our fiction-reviewer had complained that the excellent merits of Mrs. Wharton's new novel were clouded by certain defects, par-

ticularly by the outlandishly unreal language the characters were frequently made to utter. She gave several examples, including a remark by the hero about the Duke of Spartivento: "I wonder what's become of Alder's duke—you remember, the one with the name like the clanging of shields." Her comment was: "I say flatly that such a phrase as 'the name like the clanging of shields' never issued from a human throat in a sober moment". By "sober moment" she obviously

meant an ordinary, conversational moment such as Mrs. Wharton was as obviously seeking to represent. But Mr. Chesterton, by some weird aberration, got the notion that imaginative language in general was being assaulted and forthwith sprang to its defence in a remarkable series of arguments.

He proceeds, for instance, as though our reviewer had asserted that *no one ever used such language*, and in all seriousness retorts: "But it is obvious that such names and noises

must, in fact, have issued from thousands of human throats; or there would be no such titles as Spartivento, nor the great resounding Roman tongues that have given them birth". He then drives his pointless point home by allusions to other resounding place-names of the Latin peoples and to the language of Plato and of the Bible. Was there ever a sillier example of the old but unhonoured debating trick of sending a barrage of the obvi-



Thomas Derrick in "The Listener"