

Scene V.—Edinburgh.—(Seven Years Have Elapsed.)

Mr. Remington is a good deal greyer. He happens to be in Edinburgh. He wants a box of matches. He enters an unimportant shop. He finds that the man behind the counter is—Mr. Lion, of London, for whom he has long sought. It is discovered that "Mr. Lion, of London," is an obscure Edinburgh tobacconist, who has been in one particular shop for thirty years. His visit to the Glasgow hotel? Having by laborious effort scraped together two hundred pounds, he had decided to "burst" that amount on an experience of "luxury and extravagance."

Scene VI.—(Tableau.)

Lion, of London, and Remington, of nowhere in particular, united as partners, Remington now having thousands of pounds to place at the disposal of the adventurous and romantic tobacconist, whose bold excursion had been brought about by the fact that his literary fare from day to day was "trash," and because he hated the dull exile of work behind the counter of an Edinburgh shop.

(CURTAIN.)

Such, in brief, is the tale that gives the title to Mr. J. J. Bell's latest book, a collection of short stories. The first story, that of Mr. Lion, is the best, but there are others that make excellent reading, and all the chapters depict a side of Scottish life for which little or nothing has been done by the novelists. The tales are simple; but simplicity does not detract from the importance of the kind of tale to which Mr. Bell devotes himself. All of the stories that go to the making of "Mr. Lion, of London," have in them much of the originality and charm that made "Wee Macgregor" a book that was talked about in all lands where Scots are settled.

The volume has excellent illustrations by Mr. A. S. Boyd, a Scot who has personal acquaintance with the characters of whom Mr. Bell writes. Mr. Boyd's conception of the fraudulent but innocuous and kind-hearted "Mr. Lion" is particularly happy; no such type ever emanated from London. The likeness is at once that of one from the backwaters of the Canongate.

DAVID HODGE.

Novel Notes.**AYESHA.** By H. Rider Haggard. 6s. (Ward, Lock.)

In a prefatory note Mr. Haggard intimates that he does not regard "Ayesha" as a sequel to "She," but rather as "the conclusion of an imaginative tragedy, whereof one half has been already published." Which is really a distinction without a difference, for every sequel is the continuation or conclusion of a story some part of which has been already published, and this, too, is what "Ayesha" is; but it is unlike most sequels in being, in the opinion of at least one of its readers, fully equal to or even finer than the romance it completes. The story of Ayesha is related by Horace Holly, who with Leo Vincey found the immortal She-who-

must-be-obeyed, long since, in the Caves of Kor. It will be remembered how, in the moment of her terrible doom there, she swore that she would come again and be once more beautiful; and now Mr. Holly tells how, after that amazing event, he and Leo, the beloved of the divine Ayesha, returned to Cumberland and wearied there till Leo had the vision that called him forth into the vast unknown wildernesses of Central Asia, in search of the reincarnated woman who is the bride of his soul. He and Holly set out together, and, after sixteen years of adventuring, nigh perishing in the snows, sleeping in the open air, or within the hospitable walls of ancient Thibetan monasteries, do at last find the mystic mount of their vision, and in due course achieve the great object of their desire. It is a ripe and richly imaginative piece of work: the supernatural

elements that pervade it are handled with a sure and effective craftsmanship, and the thrilling and picturesque incidents and episodes of the great quest are told with unflinching vigour and fertility of invention. The many illustrations by Mr. Maurice Greiffenhagen are excellent, as his book-illustrations always are.

THE BLACK SPANIEL By Robert Hichens. 6s. (Methuen.)

Mr. Hichens tells of a black spaniel which inherited the soul of a famous London doctor who had maltreated, for vivisection purposes, a dog of the kind. The thing is eerie and unpleasant, but it is done by the hand of one who knows his tools and can use them in workmanlike fashion. Much more to our liking is "The Mission of Mr. Eustace Greyne"—a brief tale pitched in frankly farcical mould. It would make as good a farce for the stage as it makes laughable reading. Mr. Greyne is the docile husband of a famous novelist, and, equipped with many note-books, he is sent to Algiers to find all about "African frailties" for the latest novel his wife has on hand. Mr. Greyne stays a long, long time in Algiers. "African frailties" interest him. Mrs. Eustace Greyne goes to Algiers. She finds the faithful, docile Eustace performing furious fandangoes in an establishment "on the heights."

The book on behalf of which he went to Africa, "Catherine's Repentance," published in a gigantic volume not many weeks ago, we are told, was preceded by Mr. Eustace Greyne's. When last heard of he was seated in the magnificent library of the corner house of Park Lane . . . busily engaged in pasting the newspaper notices of Mrs. Greyne's greatest works into a superb new album. There are other short stories in the volume; but "The Black Spaniel" and "The Mission of Mr. Eustace Greyne" are easily the best.

ROSE O' THE RIVER. By Kate Douglas Wiggin. 5s. (Constable.)

After her well-known manner, the authoress sets a simple love-episode in a setting full of local colour. Stephen Waterman and Rose Wiley love and part and make up their differences on the banks of an American river, the Saco, which is the scene of wild exploits among the logs and lumber. The course of true love also becomes troubled. But not for long. And Mrs. Wiggin is careful to surround the lovers with some interesting natives, of whom old Mr. Wiley, the



"I seemed to see two glorious shapes sweeping upward on its bosom."
(Reproduced from "Ayesha," by kind permission of Messrs. Ward, Lock and Co., Ltd.)



"I do not find an enemy who bears so honorable a name."

(Reproduced from Max Pemberton's "The Hundred Days," by kind permission of Messrs. Cassell and Co., Ltd.)

garrulous, indolent ex-lumberman, is a delightful specimen. It is a pretty idyll of the backwoods, illustrated with some dainty coloured pictures.

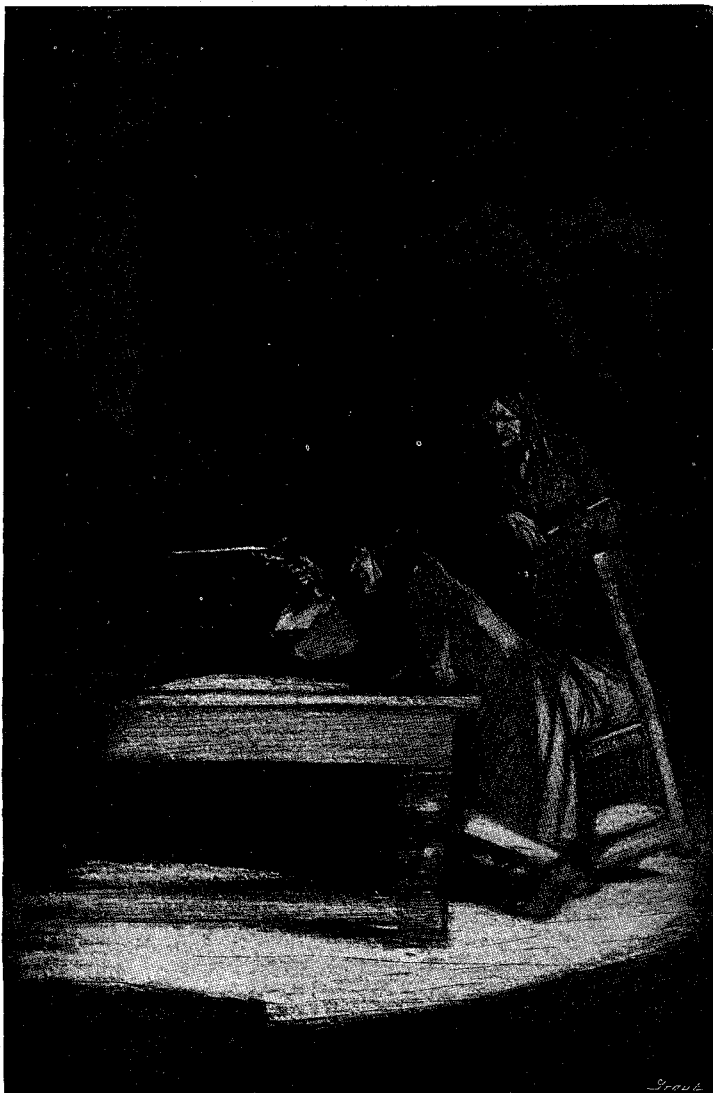
THE HUNDRED DAYS. By Max Pemberton. 6s. (Cassell and Co.)

Mr. Pemberton's dexterity in dealing with history compels our admiration. He is equally at home in any period and any country, but somehow his historical novels do not seem to have the same grip as "The Iron Pirate." Is it that we are older than when that magnificently audacious story first appeared, or is it that Mr. Pemberton has less "thrill" in his more learned novels? Perhaps both; but still we prefer the scientific pirate to the historical novelist. The period which Mr. Pemberton has chosen, the hundred days between Napoleon's escape from Elba and Waterloo, is peculiarly difficult. The task of portraying that enigmatic and baffling personality at the most thrilling moment of his career, might well daunt the boldest novelist. Napoleon has never been convincingly depicted, either in a novel or on the stage, many as are the attempts which have been made; and if Mr. Pemberton fails to convey any impression of the magnetism of the man, at least he fails in good company, and may claim credit for an ambitious attempt. For the rest, "The Hundred Days" is a workmanlike story, a trifle too mechanical in construction, but with plenty of movement. It lacks atmosphere, but it is unquestionably exciting. The dialogue is brisk and vigorous, and there is a sufficiency of love-making of a healthy and straightforward sort.

THE CHERRY RIBBAND. By S. R. Crockett. With illustrations by Claude B. Shepperson. 6s. (Hodder and Stoughton.)

The archers have recently shot sore at the pious romantic traditions of the Covenanters, but enough shelter and scope remains still for the novelist whose sympathies refuse to be intimidated by Mr. Andrew Lang and his clan of historical skirmishers. Mr. Crockett is evidently not to be driven from the neighbourhood of "The Men of the Moss-hags," and it would be a pity for the public if he were. For the Government's forces are not painted here with a blackness which would offend

the historical expert very seriously. Mr. Crockett no doubt has artistic instinct and personal conviction sufficient to show him which side in the struggle appeals most to an average modern mind; but, if he is careful to see that the Covenanters get the best of it, their successful raids upon the King's party are mainly victories of love rather than of war, and a hearty, breezy romance ends with Sergeant-Major Grif Rysland of the Dragoons, and his gay, courageous daughter, Ivie, both safely and happily married to adherents of Peden the prophet. Raith Ellison, one of the two heroes of the story, is the youngest son of a stern Covenanting family, who, after being summarily ejected from his household for some innocent intercourse with Ivie, joins her father's regiment, and eventually finds himself, along with father and daughter, on the Bass Rock, in charge of the Covenanting prisoners. Hither Peden is brought, together with Ellison's father and two of his brothers. Mutiny, escapes, the crossing of love and politics, and wild adventures follow in a breathless series, with three specially dramatic moments: one when Ivie fights a duel with Grierson of Lag, one (rather melodramatic perhaps) when her lover is well-nigh murdered by a mad rival, and one when the leaguer of Ben Aron is in force. But Mr. Crockett has put excellent work not only into his plot but into the characters. Ivie's sisterhood may not be quite unfamiliar to those who are acquainted with some of the writer's earlier stories, though the description of her development and sobering is delicately done. But the rest of the women are all convincing, and there is no lack of minor figures to fill out the scenes. Prayerful Peter Paton, for example, is almost good enough to remind one of Cuddie Headrigg, with his very prudent estimate of the religious situation. "I am aye a man o' peace," quoth this worthy, "and hae been ever since I was a wee callan runnin' the sands and howkin'



Stephen Houston, his long hair falling all about his face, sat firing horse-pistol after horse-pistol at some part of the room they could not see. (Reproduced from S. R. Crockett's new book, "The Cherry Ribband.")