

enfolded him. In the violet night, with the canopy of heaven over his head, he alone was awake and conscious. All else slept, he only was awake in that wonderful, enchanted loveliness, the loveliness of exquisite night," etc., etc.

Towards the close of the tale, Lord Oxenham loses the middle fingers of his left hand in a shooting accident, and his piano days are over. Vera then marries him, as a recompense for having omitted to tell him at an earlier stage of the understanding between her and Jack. Oxenham had loved her from the beginning. Jack attended the wedding, and then proceeded with prompt haste to that asylum for disappointed suitors, "the other side of the world."

THE LIFE OF SIR AGLOVALE DE GALIS. By Clemence Housman. 6s. (Methuen.)

What strikes one most on reading "Sir Aglovale de Galis" is the evident enthusiasm (whence no doubt the difficult title) and the loving care with which Miss Housman has drawn her romance from the chronicle of her "most dear Master," Malory. At the end of the book there are nearly twenty pages of notes! That is not the method of what we may call the slap-dash, happy-go-lucky school of historical fiction. In another respect also she has departed from the popular method. Sir Aglovale, though a Knight of the Round Table, is not the flawless, invincible hero we are used to. "Rot showed suddenly at the core of him." He does not even fail magnificently. At the end he falls into a deep abasement, and dies not glorified, but forgiven. Miss Housman's style is somewhat too archaic for our liking; more so than was necessary. But certainly, without too much whitewash, she has succeeded in investing the bloodthirsty, lusty knights with an air of graciousness and amplitude which should make "The Life of Sir Aglovale de Galis" very pleasant reading for those who are fond of Arthurian romance.

THE PILLAR OF LIGHT. By Louis Tracy. 6s. (Ward, Lock.)

Three chapters in this novel alone suffice to lift it high above the level of most contemporary fiction. These are "The Hurricane," "The Middle Watch," and "The Lottery." The first describes with splendid effect a great gale in the Channel, which all but swept the Gulf Rock Lighthouse from its foundation. The second tells no less vividly of the doom of a great liner which was dashed against the reef before the eyes of the lighthouse keeper and his two daughters, who, detained by the impending gale, were the involuntary sharers of his perilous watch. The last of the three is the heroic story of the rescue of eighty of the great ship's passengers and crew. All this part of the book it would be difficult to overpraise. There is not a wasted word, and Mr. Tracy enables us to realise with wonderful effect the horror and the sublimity of the scene. The opening chapter "Flotsam," which tells of Stephen Brand's daring rescue of a child from a derelict boat, is conceived and written in the same excellent style. Unfortunately Mr. Tracy has not been able to sustain this pitch throughout the book. The plot is vastly inferior to the description, and in the end it is pure melodrama. Long-lost relatives all come together in the marvellous manner of the stage, and all the seemingly impossible tangles are swiftly and pleasantly unloosed. But so long as the scene is the Pillar itself, the story is enthralling, and we shall yet expect from Mr. Tracy a notable novel of the sea.

FORTUNE'S CAP. By Mary E. Mann. 6s. (Hurst and Blackett.)

Miss Mary E. Mann is not one of your single-style novelists; she has written grim and powerfully realistic stories, such as "The Fields of Dulditch," or "Gran'ma's Jane," that bear comparison with the best that has been done in that kind by any living author; and on the other hand she is no less skilled in lightly humorous characterisation and the purely idyllic romance, such as she gave us in "The Patten Experiment," and gives us in "Fortune's Cap." Victoria Alberta Stocks, the "tweeny-maid" at a seaside lodging-house—a frank, self-reliant, happy, impressionable bit of a girl, who likes polishing the boots of the young master she admires, delights in having to look after the dog and the cat of the cantankerous lady lodger, enjoys all the trouble she has with them, and is the willing slave of the two elder servants—Victoria, who is named Tilly, after the maid to whose place she succeeds, is an original

and delightfully humorous creation. She dominates the book, and, in the earlier half of it especially, is drawn with great skill, a natural, ridiculously guileless, exquisitely amusing child, alike in her work and in her pleasures; and though she becomes by painful degrees a young lady (after the cantankerous lady lodger has left her a fortune, which had been intended for the handsome but neglectful young nephew whose boots Tilly had loved to clean), and becomes also more lovely and lovable, she does not become much more conventional, for she finds a way of letting the young man recover the fortune from her by law, since nothing can convince her that it is not rightly his. There are some excellent character studies in the book, and its story is one of the brightest and most charming the season has yet yielded.

DIVERS VANITIES. By Arthur Morrison. 6s. (Methuen and Co.)

The first six of these short stories are sketches of Bill Sykes and his order, done with a light, humorous touch. The next eight are mainly of low life also, including two clever examples of the author's method, in "A Poor Bargain" and "Lost Tommy Jepps." The last three are grouped under the title of "Old Essex," with a common note of the weird in them. There is nothing specially fresh in the volume, which is interesting but unequal. Some of the tales one remembers having met in magazines, where they read better than in a collection like this. It will add nothing to Mr. Morrison's reputation, though it will probably serve to while away a pleasant hour for those who know his stronger work.

The Bookman's Table.

LETTERS TO "IVY" FROM THE FIRST EARL OF DUDLEY. Edited by S. H. Romilly. 16s. net. (Longman.)

A lifelong friendship, such as that evidenced by this correspondence, between a man and a woman sixteen years his senior is in itself sufficiently remarkable to demand some notice; but rare as such friendships are in themselves, the correspondence which passed between the first Earl of Dudley and "Ivy," the wife of Professor Dugald Stewart, makes their friendship unique, and gives it a permanent value for the world. Dugald Stewart's name is now almost forgotten, except by professed students of philosophy, but few men exercised by their teaching a more lasting effect upon the public life of his time. At a time when the disturbed state of Europe made the "grand tour" dangerous, if not impossible, Stewart's lectures drew to Edinburgh some of the ablest young men of the day. He may be said to have held a kind of finishing school for budding statesmen, and his pupils included, among others, Brougham, Jeffrey, Cockburn, Lord Henry Petty (afterwards Lord Lansdowne), Palmerston, Sydney Smith, and Lord John Russell. John William Ward came under the spell of this remarkable man and his no less remarkable wife at an impressionable age, when the change from the dreary solitude of his boyhood made him peculiarly sensitive to the influence of the Stewart household. Mrs. Stewart was a woman of singular tact and charm, and her house became the resort of all who were best worth knowing in Edinburgh, at a time when that city was an intellectual metropolis. Young Ward had known little or nothing of a mother's care until he met Mrs. Stewart, and it is not surprising that his earlier letters, written when he left the Stewarts' home to go to Oxford, and afterwards to enter Parliament, show that for a time she took the place of a mother in his imagination. But as he grew older and entered public life the "dearest mama" is dropped, and the pet name of "Ivy" gives a more romantic tinge to the correspondence which continued up to the time of his death. Ward was a man of great intellectual power, and although he never made a mark in public life commensurate with his ability, he was recognised by the leading men of his day as their equal, and even in some respects their superior. His social position and his brilliance in conversation made him welcome in the best society, and his intimacy with Mrs. Stewart led him to tell her even the latest scandal. The items of "chronique scandaleuse" concerning Lady Caroline Lamb, will appeal specially to the numerous readers of

"The Marriage of William Ashe." Apropos of Lady Caroline, it is distinctly an omission on the part of the otherwise admirable editor, Mr. Romilly, not to mention that the object of Lady Caroline's infatuation (in chapter 9) was Sir Godfrey Webster, and not Byron. Lady Caroline Lamb's name would be forgotten now but for the Byron episode, and the reader's natural instinct is to assume that the reference (on page 97) is to the poet, the more so as every word would fit this supposition. In point of fact, however, Ward, as subsequent letters show, was very far from holding this view of Byron; and indeed there was a warm liking between the two men. Apart from this, Mr. Romilly has carried out his editorial work with tact and discretion; if anything, his notes err on the side of brevity, a rare failing in an editor.

SAM BOUGH, R.S.A. By the late Sidney Gilpin. 7s. 6d. net. (George Bell.)

Mr. Sidney Gilpin spent ten years in collecting the materials for this book, and it seems to have been ready for publication when he died, in 1892. Its appearance, which even then would have been a little belated, now becomes almost an indiscretion. Not that the painter's work has fallen in the estimate of public and critics during the quarter of a century since Bough's death. It probably stands as high in it as it did then, and higher than at the moment when his collected pictures were brought into rather unfortunate comparison with those of George Paul Chambers at Glasgow in 1880. But though forceful, Bough's painting has not the undying quality of individuality which alone would justify a volume of appreciation after this lapse of time; and as a matter of fact, Mr. Gilpin did not plan his volume as such. At any rate, as we have it here, it is less an estimate of Bough's art than a record of particular pictures (though, strangely, it contains no reproductions of any of them); and more than either it is an account of the man. There was a generation which knew Sam Bough, by whom this biography would doubtless have been welcomed, but we cannot predict for it a sympathetic reading now. His personality is almost forgotten, even in Scotland, where it endeared itself, or perhaps we ought rather to say made its mark, partly at least because, though it was only the country of his adoption, he seemed to accommodate himself to it like a native. To those who knew him best, Sam Bough was typically English rather than a Scot. Born in Carlisle, in 1822, he had lived over thirty strenuous and harum-scarum years before he settled in Edinburgh. It was there, in the remaining twenty of a life which never was conventional, that he did his best work, and his best was striking and sincere. In these twenty years, too, he imposed upon a great variety of people the impress of a strong and courageous, if crude and undisciplined character. We might well have been content with the tradition of it. The stories which this volume brings back to our recollections have somehow lost their savour. But many of them testify to the tenderness of heart under the rough exterior, to which it is due, doubtless, that that tradition has lingered so long.

PERSONAL STUDIES. By Henry Scott Holland. 6s. (W. Gardner.)

"As the years fall away," says Canon Scott Holland in his preface to this book, "and the earth empties itself of the voices and presences which made it famous to us, the desire grows strong to make an attempt to convey the memories of those who gave significance to our life down to another generation, to whom they are fast becoming mere names." He makes that attempt here, and the result is a fascinating and stimulating volume, in which we are reminded of much and learn much that is new about the careers and private characters of such diverse persons as Gladstone, Ruskin, Benson, Liddon, Matthew Arnold, Salisbury, Rhodes, Temple, Creighton, Stubbs, Burne-Jones, Dolling, and many another who will not soon be forgotten. Canon Scott Holland has a weakness for dropping into rhetorical moods, when his phrases strut with an almost too-solemn pomposity; he has and expresses a prejudice in favour of the not invariably apparent broad-mindedness and superiority of his own religious sect which may provoke useless controversy, but is nevertheless very human and natural; and when we have noted these characteristics we have said all that can reasonably be said in the way of dispraise. Most of the articles included are reprinted from the *Commonwealth*, a

few from the *Guardian*, and elsewhere; each of them is devoted to a prominent and profoundly interesting personality, and deals with it didactically or anecdotally, but always interestingly.

VERSES, WISE AND OTHERWISE. By Ellen Thorneycroft Fowler. 5s. (Cassells.)

Mrs. Felkin has gathered into this volume the contents of her two earliest books of verse which, as she mentions in the foreword, are now out of print. Turn the pages where you will, and you find that the verses are marked by a wonderful facility, a prevailing smartness, a pretty wit, and occasionally by touches of humour or pathos. If there is no word-magic, no "charm of all the Muses often flowering in a lonely word," there is no lack of clever phrasing and a very fluent mastery of metrical form. There is a real earnestness of thought and a breath of ecstasy in some of the more serious poems, and all through the book the rapid alternations of humour, satire, tenderness, pensive melancholy or frank frivolity have an almost dazzlingly bewildering effect on the reader. The verses are undeniably clever; if they sound no great depths of poetry and soar to no poetical heights, Mrs. Felkin probably never intended that they should. She fully achieves in them what she set herself to achieve; they are never dull, never unmelodious; sometimes they are informed with a grace and simple sincerity of thought and emotion that reaches very strong and effective expression; at their worst, they are mildly amusing, and even that is more than one can say for many a more pretentious volume.

THE GREEN SPHINX. By Bart Kennedy. 3s. 6d. (Methuen.)

Here we have the outcome of a brief tour, done partly on foot, from Cork to Dublin by way of Waterford, Tipperary, Galway and Belfast. Mr. Kennedy went "to see the country and the people, and to get as far as possible a grip of a most complex and complicated situation." He talked to everybody and saw all there was to be seen in the time. Travelling so, "you may not be able to know all the facts, and you may not be able to fathom the causes that have led to certain effects. But for all that you will grip the essentials—the high lights." "The Green Sphinx" is a book of very high lights indeed. A white-hot iron plunged into cold water would be a fairly apt parallel of Mr. Kennedy in Ireland. The man is white-hot with emotional and verbal energy. The country is water-logged and derelict—in the metaphorical sense. And the result is considerable heat, together with an immense amount of steam and sputtering. The man again is typically modern in that he seems to yearn for every life but the one he leads, of his own free will presumably. The book is a by-product of that most modern journalism which sacrifices everything, even precision and brevity, to effect. It has, like Mr. Kennedy's men of Belfast, a superabundance of expression. It reminds one curiously—at the same moment—of misty, turbulent, remote Ossian, of our own contemporary Whitman, and of the newspaper in which it first appeared. Full stops do duty for commas and dashes, to say nothing of semicolons; words have broken loose on all sides; barefaced slang jostles vigorous idiomatic English, and points are hammered in, regardless of tautology or repetition. But "The Green Sphinx" has, we imagine, a practical, semi-political, not an artistic, purpose. Rhapsody is the milieu for strong and not altogether unconvincing denunciation of the Irish Constabulary, rent-raising landlords, hypocritical Westminster and intriguing Dublin Castle—the middleman in the government of Ireland by England. How far it is just we will not pretend to say. But we remember Swift's satire, and we note that Mr. Kennedy, himself a Catholic, looks forward to a revolt against the rapacity and tyranny of the Irish priesthood. If things are only half as bad as he asserts, they are sufficiently disgraceful. And a book unusual in form and sensational in expression is not a bad way—is one of the few ways—of drawing popular attention to the matter. So "The Green Sphinx" is full of rhetorical exaggeration. On the other hand, it has a certain unity of impression uncommon in books of travel, and many of its pen-pictures have brilliance, whether or no they have depth. We should not care to read many similar books, or "The Green Sphinx" many times, but we are frankly glad to have read it once.