

comes less plausible, for, if any such balance must be struck, the man comes through the ordeal of the drama now disclosed with higher honors than the woman. Yet, withal, in its larger aspects Froude's characterization is rather confirmed than discredited. If his judgment was highly peccable, he at least had that literary genius which alone could set Carlyle before us as himself a living genius. He understood also the egotism, the magnificent egotism, of Carlyle, which is so essential a part of his power. We may henceforth, out of regard for these letters and the other letters published since Froude's work, believe that the married life of the Carlyles was not so tragic as it was there presented. Twenty years after marriage the wife could write in a letter now in the possession of the editor: "I have grown to love you, the longer the more, till now you are grown to be the whole Universe, God, everything to me"; but it is still true, and these letters do not detract from such an impression, that Carlyle must have been, to use Froude's version of the phrase, "gey ill to live with." Not with impunity shall a woman surrender herself to the keeping of one with the intense, brooding, troubled egotism that made the *fond* of Carlyle's character. Nor was he himself blind to this danger. In a moment of expansiveness, after Miss Welsh had written her confession of an early love for Irving which she had concealed from Carlyle, he breaks out into a passionate cry of alarm:

You feel grateful to me that I have "forgiven" you? You thank me, and say I treat you generously? Alas, alas! I deserve no gratitude. What have I done? Assured you that my affection is still yours, that you are even dearer to me for this painful circumstance. But do you know the worth of that affection? Have you ever seen me and my condition in the naked eye of your reason? You have not: you do not know me. . . . What is my love of you or of any one? A wild peal through the desolate chambers of my soul, forcing perhaps a bitter tear into my eyes, and then giving place to silence and death? You know me not; no living mortal knows me—seems to know me. My heart has been steeped in solitary bitterness, till the life of it is gone: the heaven of two confiding souls that live but for each other encircled with glad affection, enlightened by the sun of worldly blessings and suitable activity, is a thing that I contemplate from a far distance, without the hope, sometimes even without the wish, of reaching it. Am I not poor and sick and helpless and estranged from all men? I lie upon the thorny couch of pain, my pillow is the iron pillow of despair: I can rest on them in silence, but that is all that I can do. Think of it, Jane! I can never make you happy. Leave me, then! Why should I destroy you? It is but one bold step and it is done. We shall suffer, suffer to the heart; but we shall have obeyed the voice of reason, and time will teach us to endure it.

These were not the words of an idle romanticism; they sprang from the depths of the man's being, and in them lies the justification of Froude's magnificent biography, however we shall be obliged to correct his work in details. After all deductions are made, the real Carlyle is the Carlyle of Froude.

#### CURRENT FICTION.

*A Prince of Dreamers.* By Flora Annie Steel. New York: Doubleday, Page & Co.

Before this book appeared, one would have said that Mrs. Steel was probably as well qualified to write an historical romance of India as any one living. Her wide acquaintance with modern India she has revealed in several novels of decided depth and power. Her recently published history of the country declares her interest in the long evolution of Indian civilization. Yet in spite of her combination of talents, she has fallen to the bottom of the pit which gapes for all historical romancers, and which is most dangerous, unfortunately, to those whose purposes are most serious. The interests of the novelist spoil the "Prince of Dreamers" as history, and the interests of the historian spoil it as fiction. It was perhaps true to fact to make the court of the great sixteenth century Mogul, Jelâl-ud-din Mahomed Akbar, as dull as a stagnant pond, even when the heir-apparent was conspiring against the throne. If the book really admitted us to the mysteries of Akbar's dream, we could dispense with external action; but though his interpreter tells us in so many words that he was dreaming of empire, the man himself remains a kind of graven image, inarticulate and impenetrable to the end. In the last two or three chapters the infinitely tedious plotting and tattle about the possession of the King's Luck, a big diamond which Akbar wore in his turban, comes to a sharp head, and we enjoy a few minutes of unexpected excitement. If there is any profound significance in the story, we reluctantly assent to the motto from Hafiz on the fly-leaf: "Not every one who readeth the page understandeth the meaning." Nor—to pass on to less obscure matters—is it always easy to understand the style. The problem of making the characters speak without destroying the illusion was, of course, difficult. But a modicum of stylistic tact would have felt the vicious dissonance of "messieurs," "Let her pass an' she will," "A Rājput lives by his sword—would I had it in some wames I wot of." So far as the merely descriptive passages go—and they go very far indeed—we will not question the accuracy of Mrs. Steel's antiquarianism. It is exactly the antiquarian's love of discoursing in detail on ancient manners, costumes, etiquette, games, mor-

als, religions, and literatures—it is this antiquarianism, tempered by a love of gorgeous word pictures, that ruins the book. The ill-fated story, symbolic or not, is absolutely smothered to death by description.

*The Straw.* By Rina Ramsay. New York: The Macmillan Co.

A slight but fairly diverting book made up of a half-dozen foxhunts and a murder—the treatment is just serious enough to hit off the life of the rather seedy English gentry who follow the hounds, after the custom of their forefathers. The characterization of the dowdy, coarse-fibred women and empty-headed men is sketchy but light-handed and clever. The two rascally "Babes" who, subsidized by their aunt, pretend to be engaged in scientific farming, but in reality hang on the skirts of the hunt, are jolly novelties in humor—attached, to be sure, somewhat artificially to the main action. The Straw, the only "nice" woman in the community, is the pivot of the serious action. She excites the hatred of the faster element among her associates and the chivalry and sympathy of the better sort. She herself is an extremely passive and insignificant creature, standing mute and helpless amid the contending passions which she evokes. Yet though her attempt to save a morally drowning man leads indirectly to his ruin, the influence of the poor girl is in the long run salutary, and her sense of right and wrong becomes the touchstone to test the other characters. None of these people, however, is deep or subtle enough to excite any lasting interest. The zest of the book lies in the crisp, racy style, and in the fact that one is kept most of the time in the saddle, galloping furiously after the hounds.

*Christopher Hibbault, Roadmaker.* By Marguerite Bryan. New York: Duffield & Co.

This is a thoughtful story of serious purpose and of high-minded endurance, endeavor, and accomplishment. The scene is in England. Of the characters there is, first, the hero, who, having when a little boy tramped the road with his mother and having never forgotten how rough was the way for them both, dreams dreams of becoming a maker of "highroads—not in towns but across countries—roads that will be easy to travel on and will last." Then there is the memory of the mother, weary and worn, a Socialist who had fled from her husband, preferring poverty and the road to money made by oppressing the poor. Later comes into the story the father himself, still piling up his hard-hearted millions and desiring at last to find his son. Meantime a relative of his, an old lover of the mother, has plucked the boy from the poorhouse and

is bringing him up in an atmosphere of high thinking and useful doing. The family circle thus opened to include the young Christopher supplies a numerous addition to the list of characters, as well as a new set of problems. These, unrelated to roadmaking or to tainted wealth, are concerned with the irrational tempers of two of the group, the treatment of which is a problem in psychology. The marvellous insight and controlling force of Christopher in the case of the young girl lead to obvious results. It is doubly a document, no doubt, but no doubt, also, an interesting story written in a fine spirit. The greatest fault of workmanship is excessive deliberation. A hundred pages less and the weaving would draw together into greater firmness. The reviewer will also ever pray in the interest of the English language, and before the standard dictionaries have marked it for their own, that the word "cute" be banished from the pages of serious literature.

*Old Lady Number 31.* By Louise Forsslund. New York: The Century Co.

To write about the aged is difficult; for the sentiments, hopes, and passions of old people have been ground too fine under the wheels of the world. Great, then, is the triumph of one who catches the octogenarian soul as surely as Louise Forsslund has in this story of Abe and Angy Rose. Characters like *Old Lady Number 31* and his friends are seldom found between covers. Abe is a senile failure, who sinks all his savings in an unknown gold mine and lives for the next eighteen years on what he can borrow. Angy accepts him for worse, as for better, apologizes full forty years without complaint of his shortcomings, and whispers not an unkind word even when the auctioneer, foreclosing a mortgage, turns the pair out of their cottage. The story tells how they found lodgings in an Old Ladies' Home, lost them, and then found them again.

Miss Forsslund has sacrificed much in the narrative, but always the right things. There is no more plot than in the lives of old people; what little there is ambles along from adventure to adventure, a highly respectable, profoundly trivial picaresque. Crises turn about old armchairs, a canister of tobacco, and an oyster stew. The jests are hoary and unadorned. But with all this there is imported an exquisite honesty finer than mere realism.

*The Butler's Story.* By Arthur Train. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

This is an interesting contribution to sociological fiction from the point of view of the servant. It must be taken into consideration, however, that the butler is English, and consequently born and bred to a sense of the divine origin of class that is usually absent in Amer-

ica. He is a Yellowplush up to date, more strenuous, more serious-minded, more given to moralizing in the intervals of melodrama. The book is essentially journalism, and flatters the reader with a sense of astuteness by allowing him to recognize through thin disguises divers sensations of the day, from the latest exposure of graft to the innocent pranks of the inexhaustible author of "The Metropolis."

*William Lyon Mackenzie.* By Charles Lindsey. Toronto: Morang & Co.

The important series of historical biographies, *The Makers of Canada*, is brought to a conclusion by this life of William Lyon Mackenzie, political reformer and leader of the Upper Canadian rebellion of 1837. The original intention was that Dr. W. D. LeSueur of Ottawa, one of the editors of the series, was to have contributed the volume on Mackenzie. Dr. LeSueur prepared the biography, but through some unfortunate differences of opinion between author and publisher as to the character of the work—the merits of which need not be gone into here—Dr. LeSueur's book was withdrawn, and another substituted. Failing Dr. LeSueur's biography, which, in such scholarly hands, could not have been anything but informing, it is fortunate that the publisher had available another life of Mackenzie of more than ordinary merit. Charles Lindsey's "Life and Times of William Lyon Mackenzie" was first published as long ago as 1862, and was found to be so full and impartial that it has remained to the present day the only published life of the great Canadian. Mr. Lindsey, who died a few months ago at an advanced age, enjoyed exceptional opportunities for acquiring the essential material for an account of Mackenzie. He had not only at command a mass of documentary material left by Mackenzie, bearing upon his career in politics and journalism, and on the history of the rebellion, but Lindsey's personal relations with Mackenzie had been exceptionally intimate. Politically, the two men were wide apart; yet the biographer handled his subject so judiciously that even in 1862, when the bitterness of party spirit had not yet been softened by a broader national outlook, the book commended itself to men of all political views. For the present series, Charles Lindsey's work has been carefully edited by his son, G. G. S. Lindsey of Toronto, who has condensed it and added a good deal of new material drawn from family documents. In an introductory chapter he has embodied a clear and well-balanced review of the stormy period in which Mackenzie's energetic personality filled so large a place. Here Mr. Lindsey has made effective use of Durham's "Report on Canadian Affairs,"

which furnishes striking testimony as to the intolerable conditions preceding the rebellion of 1837.

Mackenzie was born in Dundee, Scotland, in 1795. After several unsuccessful attempts to make a living in his native land, he sailed for Canada in 1820. After his arrival he was engaged for a time in business, but his impetuous temperament would not long brook the rôle of a mere onlooker. Upper Canada was seething with unrest, and, in 1824, Mackenzie threw himself into the fight for responsible government, almost immediately taking a leading part among the reformers. He established the *Colonial Advocate* at Queenstown, moving it the following year to York (now Toronto), and vehemently attacked the Family Compact and the abuses of power for which he held that select group of Tories responsible. Elected to the Legislature in 1828, he became the virtual leader of the reform party there, as well as throughout the province. Of the circumstances attending his repeated expulsions from the Legislature by the dominant party, and the obstinacy with which his constituents sent him back with increased majorities; his mission to England; the events leading up to the rebellion, and the rebellion itself; his exile in the United States, and his relations there with Presidents Van Buren and Polk, with Horace Greeley, and others; his return to Canada in 1850 and election to the Legislature the following year; his retirement from politics and later years—of all these matters a very full, impartial, and thoroughly interesting account is given. Few thoughtful Canadians nowadays will be found to condemn Mackenzie unreservedly, in face of all the facts, even in his final resort to armed rebellion. The principles for which he contended, for which he fought and suffered, are those which to-day form the very foundation-stones of the great commonwealths of Canada and Australia, and will be embodied in the Constitution of the coming commonwealth of South Africa. They are generally accepted by all English-speaking peoples.

*Side Lights on Chinese Life.* By the Rev. J. Macgowan; with 12 illustrations in color by Montague Smith and 34 other illustrations. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co. \$3.75 net.

*Every-Day Japan.* By Arthur Lloyd; with 8 plates in color and 96 reproductions from photographs. New York: Cassell & Co. \$4 net.

Notwithstanding striking contrasts which appear upon the surface, the Chinese and the Japanese are regarded by many persons as substantially one people, or, if not one, still as closely related and to be put in the same class. With other persons the question of the superiority of the one race or the other