

and encouraging, compels belief that the negro, despite his admitted limitations, is steadily rising in the scale of civilization and justifying such freedom as is, however grudgingly, accorded to him.

Mr. Baker's attitude, on the other hand, is that of the experienced newspaper reporter, practised in observing closely and in following clues, skilled in choosing relevant and illustrative facts, accustomed to describing things as he sees them, but without marked sense of perspective. "Following the Color Line" is an attempt to discover and expose the facts regarding race discrimination and the reason for it, and to explain the attitude of the South, both black and white, towards race riots, lynching, and other less violent, but effective attacks upon negro individuals and negro communities in various parts of the country. Mr. Baker's conclusion that the white man rises against the negro whenever the negro comes, or appears likely to come, into effective economic or political competition with him, and that discrimination and denial of social equality, being grounded in a conviction of white superiority, are inevitable preventive checks applied to keep the races apart, is not, of course, novel; but the wealth of illustration which crowds his pages gives telling force to much of what he says.

Mr. Stone, who for several years has been known to a small circle as one of the most acute and painstaking students of negro conditions in the South, has made a volume out of a number of addresses and magazine articles, to which Prof. Walter F. Willcox adds three papers on negro criminality, census statistics of the negro, and the probable increase of the negro race in the United States. Mr. Stone is at his best in dealing with statistics and concrete economic conditions, and his studies of the negro in the cotton lands of the Yazoo delta have been recognized by economists as of prime importance. The paper on "The Mulatto Factor in the Race Problem," first published in the *Atlantic* in May, 1903, and extensively commented on at that time, is a substantive contribution of permanent interest. In the field of agricultural labor, which he is apparently making his own, Mr. Stone can speak with authority; but in the broader field of social and political relations, he is less happy. His papers on "The Negro in Politics" and "Mr. Roosevelt and the Negro" are repetitious and inconclusive. As regards negro criminality, Professor Willcox finds "a large and increasing amount of negro crime . . . manifested all over the country," due to "defective family life, defective industrial equipment and ability in comparison with their competitors, increasing race solidarity among the negroes, and increasing alienation from the

whites" (p. 474). To the extent to which the Southern whites minimize their own responsibility, or Northern whites ignore Southern conditions and the effect of Federal policy since the Civil War, each helps to perpetuate sectional antagonism.

All of these writers agree in approaching the study of the negro problem with open mind, in keeping close to facts and avoiding vague or sententious generalizations, and in attending to small details with patient care. Mr. Baker, more accustomed than the others to tilting a lance, frankly affirms the intellectual and moral unfrankness of the South in its attitude towards the whole question; but his volume, like the others, bears testimony to the evident, though painfully slow and irregular, progress of the better class of negroes in morals, education, economic efficiency, wealth, and political capacity. The one fact that stands out glaringly, however, in all these discussions is the well-nigh universal tendency, North as well as South, to discrimination against the negro as belonging to an inferior race. We are brought face to face with the as yet unsolved problem of democracy—the ability of a democratic society to comprehend within its spirit races essentially diverse. To this hard question neither writer ventures more than a hesitant answer, an expression of hope rather than of confident faith. They leave the educated and efficient negro where they find him—on trial before a changing and unsympathetic democracy.

#### CURRENT FICTION.

*Heather.* By John Trevena. New York: Moffat, Yard & Co.

This book is the second of a moorland trilogy, begun with "Furze, the Cruel" (see the *Nation* of March 26, 1908, p. 387). *Heather* typifies endurance, and the last book is to deal with Granite as embodying strength. In spite of a certain crude power in the first of the series, "Furze," one was left wondering whether it would be possible for human ingenuity to construct a much more disagreeable book. "Heather" answers this question; it can be done, and Mr. Trevena has done it. After the present work, our faith in his dismal possibilities is unlimited. He may have a sense of humor and produce in "Granite" a thing of sweetness and light; but in this supposition the reader's hope and faith are not coöperative. "Heather" begins at a tomb, whence the scene shifts to a sanatorium for consumptives, an institution that, as portrayed by Mr. Trevena, savors strongly of an asylum for the insane. From this auspicious beginning the tale moves on consistently through disease, filth, madness, discouragement, and degradation indescribable of body and mind. By a

final *tour de force*, Winnie Shazell, the personified Heather-spirit, is returned to her native moor and, supposedly, to happiness with George Brunacombe; but after almost five hundred pages of the ingredients specified above, one is inclined to meet the suggestion of a possibility of wholesome joy with incredulous apathy. The characters are for the greater part entirely unconvincing; Cruickshank at his wildest never conceived such a phantasmagoria of grim caricature. Their one great common bond is a strenuously dwelt upon aversion to personal cleanliness. Among them all only three are represented with a thoroughly sane and healthy outlook on life—Gregory Breakback, the clean-hearted peasant visionary; Tobias, the fox-terrier; and Bubo, the one-legged owl. One is compelled to believe that Mr. Trevena is endeavoring to set forth some great truth—no aim less potent could have sustained him through this grewsome task: the question is, What is he trying to tell?

*The Adventures of a Nice Young Man.*

By AIX. New York: Duffield & Co.

The anonymity of this book really piques curiosity; for, unlike the general run of unacknowledged novels, it possesses exceptional qualities of style and temper. Its author is an observant spectator of the present, but his imagination turns for contrast and refreshment to the eighteenth century—to the time of the Queen Anne wits and moralists, to the time of Pamela, Joseph Andrews, and Dr. Primrose. It is a part of the interesting reaction, of which William De Morgan's books are also a part, against the self-consciousness, the small realism, the unhealthy psychologizing of the "new literature." The success with which "Aix" has laid off the new literary man and put on the old is remarkable; he has not only achieved a fluent, humorous, easy-chair style of the eighteenth century—we need not say exactly whose—but he has assumed also, with equal happiness, its moralizing and humanistic spirit.

The special novelty of the book is that it holds this antique literary mirror up to contemporary life in New York. The hero and narrator is a young man of to-day whose youth was nourished on Latin and Greek and the English classics by an almost extinct type of scholarly clergyman in an out-of-the-way place. Like an adventurer from another age, he enters the metropolis to seek his fortune. His ideas of religion and morals hark back to Pope and Bolingbroke; his notions of polite society to Congreve and Dryden. He steps into literary circles where Fanny Burney is mistaken for a living author and Fielding for a contemporary of "rare Ben Jonson." His scraps of Horace and Molière cause a raising of eyebrows. In many other re-

spects, however, he finds the modern world similar to that which Tom Jones knew. It is a pity that so dashing a piece of bravura was not more vigorously sustained. In the latter part of the novel the initial mimetic impulse seems to flag, and the piquant personality of the hero subsides rather disappointingly into that of the author. Furthermore, the narrative, episodic enough throughout, is artificially broadened toward the end, checked, and overburdened by the serious satirical purpose. As a result, the work is notable neither in structure nor in characterization. Its interest lies very largely in the archaic literary flavor and the peculiar play of the comic spirit over the selfishness, the vanity, the feverish business, the smug absorption in the present, the superficial culture of present-day Americans. The satire hits many marks, but it is singularly genial and entertaining; it strikes with a kind of old-fashioned wit and antique urbanity.

*The Tramping Methodist.* By Sheila Kaye-Smith. London: George Bell & Sons.

The first pages of this story give signs of its being a novel of theology and dogma. The time is eight years or so after the death of Wesley. The Methodists had seceded from the Established Church, Methodism was in bad repute, and the tramping preacher ran no small chance of ill-usage. Humphrey Lyte was born into a family of debased churchmen. Doctrine might be rigid, but life was lax, and the little boy underwent a quite theatrical amount of cruelty before experiencing instant conversion from reading a Kempis. Later, his yearning for a more frequent administering of the Sacrament than the easy-going parishes of his neighborhood afford, turns him from being "loyal churchman and devout Sacramentalist" to Methodism. The final impulse is furnished him by a happy falling in with a saintly Methodist trio of friends, a father and daughter, and a famous, ragged, wandering preacher, a man of "two loves, God and Nature, and two books, the Bible and the green earth." Just as the reader has settled to the expectation of a novel of creeds, a wind blows through the pages and the hero, preacher though he is, proves to be a gypsy of gypsies. His mission is to save souls and it takes deep hold of him. But Nature comforts him in all his wrestlings of spirit, and in his profound personal sorrows. With him, the reader does a bit of road wandering that Stevenson might have prompted.

And now begins the fermenting of a real plot in a good old English way. It deals with past injuries and present vengeance; with faithful love and loyal self-sacrifice; with treachery, murder, and sudden death; with foul prison life, and freedom on Sussex downs;

with fervent religious faith, even to the brink of martyrdom, and rescue by the arm of the Lord. The whole is almost a revival of the novel of an older day; rather, perhaps, a combination of several time-honored models. It has a foundation of theology, an atmosphere of "Lavengro," but a "Lavengro" less occupied with towns and more with rivers, skies, dewy mornings, and the songs of birds; it has a touch, too, of the hero-villain-and-mystery manner of "Smugglers and Foresters." After the slight preliminary depression, after dogma has yielded to piety, it is a story of real substance and interest, in a vein uncommon now, a welcome return to dignified ways of fiction.

*The Letters of Jennie Allen to Her Friend Miss Musgrove.* By Grace Donworth. Boston: Small, Maynard & Co.

These letters are a strictly domestic product of a type sufficiently established to require no protective tariff. A New England woman, who lives in her brother's large and tumultuous family and makes her living by sewing on "rappars," writes voluminously to a friend and unfolds the heart and hearth affairs of herself, her family, and her neighborhood. She is "a woman without nerves" and with a capacious heart, and is disclosed by the march of her pen as a humble instrument of Providence in making crooked things straight and rough things smooth. There is not a kind action or a blunder in spelling that Jennie Allen does not profusely practise. From spoiling her little nieces and nephews to reuniting parted lovers runs the range of her altruism. Her letters are written in the quintessence of dialect made up of New England, Pomona of Rudder Grange, and Jeames Yellowplush. At lamentable moments some deplorable punning and other lapses from taste pull the book down below even its own moderate level. But with those drawbacks there is diversion of a plain, amiable, rag-carpetty sort between its covers.

*Memoirs of the Dukes of Urbino:* Illustrating the Arms, Arts, and Literature of Italy, 1440-1630. By James Dennistoun of Dennistoun. A new edition, with notes by Edward Hutton; illustrated. 3 vols. New York: John Lane Co.

"As for the corruptions and moths of history, which are epitomes, the use of them deserveth to be banished as all men of sound judgment have confessed." So wrote Bacon in his "Advancement of Learning"; and his great rival Coke, showed himself of the same opinion:

This I know, that abridgments in many professions have greatly profited the au-

thors themselves; but as they are used, have brought no small prejudice to others; . . . for I hold him not discrete that will *sectari rivulos*, when he may *petere fontes*.

Such was the counsel of two great Elizabethans, and who shall gainsay it? Yet the author who would follow it, not only in his own researches but also in his manner of writing, can hardly hope for his reward from the general reader; and we are, therefore, not surprised that James Dennistoun's learned "Memoirs of the Dukes of Urbino" has reached only its second edition, after a lapse of well nigh sixty years. That he spared neither time nor labor, that he made himself acquainted with all available original sources, that he examined innumerable manuscripts in half the libraries of Central Italy, that his work is sound and scholarly and honest—all these things have profited him little with the public, because he is too full, too exhaustive, and too prolix. For years to come, his book will probably continue to form one of the principal quarries, from which historians of the houses of Montefeltro and Della Rovere must hew much of their most valuable material, but it has found and, we fear, will always find, even in its new dress, but a limited circle of readers. Its great and abiding usefulness is as a work of reference.

And this is a fact which Mr. Hutton has consistently borne in mind. Except for the correction of such errors as were obviously due to oversight and the occasional transfer to the footnotes of digressions which unpardonably interrupted the narrative, he has wisely left the text of his author untouched. His business lay with the notes; and his notes are precisely what notes to such a work should be. It would be difficult to imagine anything better. Crammed with references to all the latest Italian authorities, they form an extraordinarily complete catalogue of the literature of the subject, and have brought Dennistoun entirely up to date. The index, too, is remarkably full and accurate, and it is no exaggeration to assert that, thanks to its editor's unselfish industry and zeal, the value of the book has been more than doubled. Mr. Hutton has done excellent work before in more than one field of literature, but he has never yet done anything for which the serious student of things Italian will feel so profoundly grateful.

A special feature of this new edition is its illustrations, some of which, such as the portraits of "Giulia Diva" and Cesare Borgia, from contemporary medals, now in the British Museum, are of a more than superficial importance. The pictures, over a hundred in number, have been selected to reflect the spirit of the book, which flings its arms wide and embraces many things besides the Counts and Dukes of Urbino. Accord-