

philosophers, savants, poets, and litterateurs joined hands in communicating to the national life a splendor and vigor it had never known since the days of Matthias Corvinus. This grand epoch ended with the reforms of 1848, which—creating Hungarian democracy—gave to our old Constitution the new strength of Parliamentary forms. But these magnificent results were engulfed in a catastrophe of which I may not relate the details. Be it far from me, the thought of lifting even a corner of the veil which our gracious sovereign and the nation have with one accord cast over the unhappy events of that time.

Not only Hungary, but Cisleithania, it may be added, had her "golden age," while groaning under Francis's paternal despotism, Ferdinand's good-natured incapacity, and Metternich's brutal censorship. If Hungary cherishes the memory of her Count Széchenyi, Baron Eötvös, Vörösmarty, and Arany, Austria points with equal pride to her Count Anton Auersperg ("Anastasius Grün"), Baron Feuchtersleben, Grillparzer, and Lenau. But Count Apponyi is justified in claiming for the Hungarian lower nobility—the "noble democracy," as it has been termed—an undisputed preëminence in its many acts of self-renunciation. It remains to be seen whether it will be willing to part with its remaining privileges, when the extension of the suffrage, now before the Hungarian nation, becomes a burning question.

Percy Alden, the editor of the volume, who is known for his interest in settlement work, contributes an interesting paper on "The State Child," which explains in detail the work of the nation in caring for its neglected children. The whole of Hungary is divided into seventeen districts, in each of which there is a State Children's Refuge. In these asylums there were housed on January 1, 1908, 35,242 children. Each district has a Children's Law Court, concerned not so much, as in England, with the trial of youthful offenders, but with the permanent guardianship of every child. The career of each is followed up by these courts. Not more than about 5 per cent. remain in the refuge; the others are boarded out in specially organized children's colonies, provided with all educational and sanitary appliances. Two hundred and thirty-eight of these village colonies are now in existence. It ought to be added that this state paternalism has had only a beneficial effect on the poor. There is no tendency to hand over children needlessly to the state, and the number of illegitimate births has decreased, as has the death-rate among children cared for by the state, as compared with the mortality among others. Thus, in one of the most important of all social problems, Hungary, in Mr. Alden's language, "leads the way and sets an example to Western nations."

It would be interesting, did space permit, to speak in detail of the equally

praiseworthy efforts of the present Minister of Agriculture, Dr. Daranyi, to improve the lot of the small farmer and agricultural laborer. His endeavors have resulted in a system of old-age pensions, in the building of houses for agricultural laborers, in the establishment of about 2,000 reading clubs, and in schools devoted to such special subjects as poultry and bee-keeping, afforestation, dairy farming, wool-sorting, etc. More than 2,000 local coöperative banks, nearly 1,000 coöperative stores, and 700 coöperative dairies afford unusual credit and purchasing facilities. Of Prof. Zsolt Beöthy's article on "The Intellectual Life of Hungary," which betrays a somewhat strained effort to conceal the barrenness of modern Hungarian literature, as compared with the glories of the past, we can only say that it exalts the prosy "Tragedy of Man" of the dramatist Madách as having "ascended the highest heights of poetic philosophy." A chapter on "Hungarian Music," by Julius Káldy, modestly informs the world that "recently Julius Káldy, with his works . . . has aroused much enthusiasm."

The accuracy of the volume in the matter of Hungarian accents and other respects (the Danube is spoken of as the largest river in Europe) is not all that might be desired, and, as in so many books on Hungarian subjects, the average foreign reader is puzzled by the Magyar names of places which are much better known by other appellations: Few Austrians even recognize Strigonia as Gran, Kassa as Kaschau, and Szabadka as Maria-Theresiopel. The numerous illustrations, with the exception of the half-tone portraits of the members of the Wekerle Cabinet, do not add much to the interest of Mr. Alden's volume.

CURRENT FICTION.

A Reaping. By E. F. Benson. New York: Doubleday, Page & Co.

The diary-tale continues to hold its own as a popular variant from the narrative form of fiction. You open the book with some misgiving, perhaps. What if it should turn out to be nothing but a real diary, a record of thoughts and happenings as crudely arranged by nature, without sequence or ending? The first pages of "A Reaping" have an ominous look. Reflections on the foibles of the amateur invalid, on the mystical function of the musical conductor, on silence, record-making, lovers by the Serpentine, motor-bus antics, and what-not: one saving hint alone in connection with a dinner-neighbor from whom you feel that you are to hear again shortly. It is enough: you are reassured. There is meaning in the entrance of the dinner-lady; this is no mooning diarist you have to deal with, but a story-teller who knows what he is about. Presently

you are rewarded by presentation to the other persons: Helen, the wife of the pseudo-diarist, and a youth known as "Legs." Helen is a bride of a few years, lovely and lovable, childless thus far, but wistful of motherhood. "Legs" is just out of the university and on the edge of the diplomatic service, a first cousin of the Helen's husband. He is "a fanatic on the subject of life," the embodiment of young ardor, a most engaging and real person. The story connected with these people is, after all, reducible to very small terms. The dinner-lady dies (as it is known that she must from the outset), "Legs" sees her ghost, and he himself dies within the year. Not very long after his death Helen becomes a mother. These are the outward events; but the chief thing, after all, is the inward experience of the young pair after the death of "Legs"—a peculiarly Bensonian experience. This Mr. Benson differs in many ways from his brothers, the priest and the don, but he has in common with them an immense curiosity as to the phenomena of death.

The Oath of Allegiance. By Elizabeth Stuart Phelps. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co.

Jonathan and David. By Elizabeth Stuart Phelps. New York: Harper & Bros.

It is always a little hard to speak of the fresh work of a veteran and inveterate story-teller like Mrs. Phelps Ward. In her case, the task is especially difficult for the commentator of middle age, who recalls her with some tenderness as a light unto a favorite path of his sentimental youth. What if Miss Alcott were still writing of her little women, her "roses in bloom"? Would it now seem to us who grow old that her later work was inferior, while the real fault lay with ourselves? Mrs. Ward is a dozen years younger than Miss Alcott would be if she were alive now; but her fiction belongs to the same school, and, we may fairly say, to the same period of unabashed sensibility. How long ago was it that a Miss Phelps of Andover was making us cry with her "Gates Ajar"? No doubt, she is still making people cry. Her method has not changed, any more than Bret Harte's changed; her later product is more nearly equal to her earlier than his was. The chief difference, perhaps, lies in the ranking quality of her audience. The most enlightened class of readers no longer inclines, if it has tears, to shed them over the obvious. Woe as a luxury has gone down in the social scale.

These later stories are not without their modern touches. Similes are built upon the "X-ray" and the aeroplane. But the material, with its little touches of modern dress, is the old material. There is always the appeal to sympathy from weakness: the pathos of childhood,

maidenhood, spinsterhood, senility, caninity. Two of the stories in "The Oath of Allegiance" volume, however, "His Soul to Keep" and "A Sacrament," are of fresher and deeper quality. The title story represents Mrs. Ward's sentiment at its most strained.

"Jonathan and David," a short story, printed by itself, as a holiday booklet, is the tale of an indigent old gentleman and his utterly impossible dog. It should be greeted with enthusiasm by admirers of "Loveliness."

Northern Lights. By Gilbert Parker. New York: Harper & Bros.

If the reader is at first inclined to attribute the mediocrity of these tales to the slackening hand of a writer to whom his art has ceased to be a first object, or to the careless hand of a writer grown too sure of his audience, a second glance will probably suggest another reason. They bear the ear-marks of prentice work. They play stiffly upon the strings of popular sentiment; they exhibit the life of the frontier in its obvious aspects, and especially as offering a rugged scene for the enforcement of the familiar lessons of love, duty, sacrifice, and valor which form the respectable stock in trade of the magazine romancer. In short, it seems pretty clear that Sir Gilbert has been persuaded to exhume these specimens of his early work for commercial reasons.

The "Note" prefixed to the volume does not, to be sure, suggest such a possibility. It merely announces that the tales belong in substance to "two different epochs in the life of the Far West"—the period before and the period after the entrance of the Canadian Northwest by the railroads and the Mounted Police. The implication would be that the book might be supposed to offer some sort of original commentary upon life in the Northwest during those periods. As a matter of fact, the substance of the tales is commonplace. They are pretty good stories, and touched with local color: pioneers freeze their feet on long solitary journeys—Indians starve in their winter camps—the brave pioneer girl is everywhere in evidence as the rescuer of the derelict pioneer man—the reprieve of the hero wrongfully condemned comes just in time. The stories are not dull, they are as good as the ordinary specimen of their *genre*. The honest tribute we can offer their creator is our surprise and disappointment that they are in no way better than that.

Other People's Houses. By E. B. Dewing. New York: The Macmillan Co.

This is an acute study—acute at times to the point of painfulness—of a phase of life especially aggressive in our own time, but peculiar to no single period. The looker-on at life, the dweller in other people's houses, is a familiar figure

both in fiction and in fact. It is possible, however, to wear the rue with a difference, and the author has chosen to strike the despondent chord rather than to emphasize the note of high courage to which the melody of these incomplete lives is so often keyed. For this very reason, it may be, Emily Stedman is not quite convincing, in spite of the abundance of personal detail which, according to long precedent, is supposed to endow a character with vital force. The story deals with parti-colored skeins of affection, much tangled; in the endeavor to imbue the reader's mind with the atmosphere of the tale, the writer has obtained an excessive effect of confusion. The scene shifts so rapidly that one's mental vision is left with that sense of blurred weariness produced in the physical by a cinematograph. This, however, may be the result of literary immaturity, as there is an underlying power in the book that definitely conveys a promise of better things.

THE STUDY OF HISTORY.

Historical Evidence. By the Rev. H. B. George, M.A., Fellow of New College. Oxford: The Clarendon Press.

When in 1860 Charles Kingsley was inaugurated professor of modern history in the University of Cambridge, he delivered an address upon the limits of exact science as applied to history. Instead of formulating the principles governing the use of historical evidence, he defended in vague and grand epithets the action of moral law and spiritual agencies in the world of human life. It is a far cry from the defensive attitude of the famous preacher and lecturer in 1860 to the historian's calm acceptance to-day of the scientific approach, and it is a noteworthy fact that it was Buckle, a representative of the group that Kingsley so vigorously attacked, who popularized belief in the possibility of applying scientific treatment to historical problems. In truth, scientific criticism, like science itself, is deemed no longer hostile to religious belief, and this truism finds ample support in the fact that the work here under review, which is our most recent exposition of scientific historical criticism, is written by a clergyman of the Church of England.

Criticism as applied to historical sources of information is as old as Petrarch, but the raising of such criticism to the rank of a scientific pursuit is a very modern matter. No general treatise on the subject was published until 1889, and even to-day there is no manual in English that deals in a comprehensive way with all classes of historical knowledge. The present work is, therefore, doubly welcome, for it not only supplies an adequate statement of the leading principles governing the treatment of evidence, but it is present-

ed with so much sanity and good judgment as to commend itself heartily to any one concerned with the writing of history. Its author is a veteran, well known for more works than one, and notably for a treatise on the relations of geography and history and for an authoritative account of Napoleon's invasion of Russia. As a clear, well-balanced statement of the scope and limitations of criticism as applied to historical evidence; it has no superior; in its moderation and freedom from exaggerated pretensions, it will serve as a corrective of some modern notions regarding the attainment of scientific certainty in historical knowledge.

To the author, as to many another competent historian, historical criticism is nothing more than common sense systematically and logically applied. But it is the common sense of the trained scholar, not that of the man in the street. The instinct for wise and sound criticism is born of wide knowledge and tried experience. It is true that some men are born critics, as were Julien Havet in France and Prof. E. G. Bourne in this country; but the majority of men have the necessity of criticism thrust upon them. To those who become critics by training, such a work as this will be indispensable, and in the hands of the beginner it is bound to exercise a profound influence. Every prospective doctor of philosophy in history should ponder it well. Within its field the range is a broad one. The author first defines evidence in law, science, and history, and determines wherein historical evidence differs from legal evidence and from that available for the exact sciences. He then considers the various sources of historical information, the nature of historical narratives, the defects of historical writers, the characteristics of documents not narrative, and the value of indirect sources—physical, geographical, archæological, and the like. He closes with chapters on probability, on special sources of error, and on certain rules governing historical generalizations.

Mr. George furnishes, however, no categorical canons, such as may be found in Rhomberg's series of historical axioms. In general, he avoids sharp distinctions and subtle analyses such as characterize the German treatises. This absence of precise formulæ gives to the work a certain inarticulate character which to some scholars may seem a defect. To the present reviewer this want of precision seems one of the best features of the book, for historical evidence cannot be marshalled under rules that operate like the axioms in geometry. Mr. George has handled each subject with caution and his views stand in striking contrast with the assertions, often extreme and unwarranted, to be found in the "Etudes Historiques" of Langlois and Seignobos. We can recom-