

nality, and kind good nature." Another wonderful fact is that women are very much respected, and that the men help to cultivate, being responsible for the "cultivation of all cereals, whilst the women are responsible for the plantain groves." An important part of Mr. Purvis's work was the preparation of a grammar and of a dictionary of ten thousand words, which, however, form but a portion of the native vocabulary. One great difficulty in teaching them is the almost total lack of words to express abstract ideas, as love, grace, faith, trust, holiness, etc. For this last word in especial their language has no equivalent, but they grasp the idea quickly and express it by *kikosefu*, "cleanness or whiteness."

In 1906 a government research expedition was sent to German East Africa, the ethnological and sociological work being entrusted to Prof. Karl Weule of the University of Leipzig. In addition to his published official report he has given in his "Native Life in East Africa" a narrative of his personal experiences, together with much of the information gained during the six months spent in the southern district of the colony. He took every occasion to see the natives in their huts, at their daily occupations, and especially to be present at their songs and dances. Having a camera, a cinematograph, and a phonograph, he was able to secure many valuable pictures and records. At one place, after the singing had ceased, he reproduced some of their songs, to the measureless and joyous astonishment of the brown chorus. When he had finished, "two women, who had previously attracted my notice by their tremendous vocal power, as well as by the elegance of their attire, came forward again; and, as the crowd fell back, leaving a clear space in front of the phonograph, first one and then the other approached the apparatus, dropped a curtsy in the finest court style, and, waving her hand towards the mouthpiece said, '*Kwa, heri, sauti yangu!*'—'Good-bye, my voice!'" The most valuable part of his contributions to our sociological knowledge of the natives is his carefully detailed account of the *unyago*, the ceremonies at the coming of the boys and girls to the age of puberty, which includes the circumcision of the boys. During this period they are kept in separate isolated camps and are instructed by mothers and specially appointed teachers in the rules of conduct and hygiene. "The behavior of young people to their elders in general deserves to be called exemplary." Among their games he found four kinds of tops, one of which corresponds to our peg-top and the diabolito. He also got "two charming specimens of an African telephone, consisting of two miniature drums, beautifully carved and covered with the delicate skin of some small animal, perforated in the middle to al-

low the passage of a thin string, which is kept from slipping through by a knot on the inside of the skin." A picture is given of two children talking through it, the string being about a hundred yards in length. He found the natives very fond of drawing, and he reproduces one striking fresco found on the wall of a hut, together with many pictures drawn by the natives at his request. The value of the book is increased by the fact that the translator is professor of Zulu at King's College, London, and the author of several works on the African races. To her admirable translation she has added many valuable notes, in which some errors in Professor Weule's conclusions are corrected and much additional information is given.

CURRENT FICTION.

A Mine of Faults. Translated from the original manuscript by F. W. Bain. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons.

In this volume, Mr. Bain, by official occupation principal of the Deccan College, Poona, has given us another of the charming stories introduced some years ago by his "Digit of the Moon." The present tale tells how woman, being, indeed, a "mine of faults," is, for that very reason, only the more adorable; "if women had no faults, half their charm would disappear." In true Indian fashion, the story is represented as related by Giva to his wife. Once upon a time, there lived two kings, one having a daughter and the other a son. But these kings were hereditary foes, and the son threatened the country of his father's rival, who was utterly helpless before this peril. The young prince was a most thorough misogynist of the brave theoretical sort, able to prate finely about the shortcomings of all feminine kind. Against him is brought, by the minister of the imperilled kingdom, the foe that the invader had mocked, and before the "mine of faults," the mighty warrior is helpless.

The story, thus baldly outlined, must be read for its beauty to be appreciated. The princess, delicate and charming as she is crafty, awakens in Chand the love that he had scorned. And the development of this love is set forth, swiftly indeed—for in India love is ever at first sight—yet without a single false note. But Love wins a double victory, and herein lies one of the most delightful aspects of the tale. For the princess plays with the coolness of a master hand on each emotion of Chand, feeling none herself, aiming only to conquer him for the safety of her father's realm; until, at the last, the perfidy of her rôle overpowers her, in the face of Chand's devotion, and she reveals the plot. More than once, the psychology of love is touched upon with nice discrimination:

The tests of love are only two, the power

of recollection and the capacity to forgive. For false love forgets at once, and cannot forgive at all. But love that is really love forgives forever, and never forgets.

In beauty of diction and wealth of description the story is characteristic of Sanskrit literature at its best. Thus the princess is described:

... all unconscious of her own inexplicable charm, like a great blue lonely lotus-flower growing on a silent mirror of black water in an undiscovered forest pool, never even dreaming of looking at its own reflection in the water, towards which all the time it bends, as if to kiss it.

The Sanskrit device of paronomasia lends a special Indian enchantment to this exotic story, though it is the current fashion for Occidentals to object to this form of embellishment. Thus, "so great was his pleasure in its recollection," (p. 57), also means, punning on *smara*, "love, recollection," "so great was his pleasure in love of it [the mind-picture of the princess]"; I "will do what I can, in my weakness" (p. 84), may also mean "I will do what I can, as a woman," punning on *abdala*, "weak, woman"; and "bee" (*bhramara*) in "are not all bees naturally rovers, and hard to satiate?" (p. 113) also means "lover."

The "Mine of Faults," like Mr. Bain's previous works, is declared on the title-page to be translated from a (Sanskrit) manuscript. Reviewers have, without exception so far as the present writer knows, denied this, holding that Mr. Bain is himself the author. It is true that his writing contains some Occidental touches, though, perhaps, the need of occasional adaptation to the general public might be urged in explanation of this fact. It is also true that the Sanskrit titles which he gives as the original designations of his stories are not to be found in catalogues of Sanskrit manuscripts; but neither are a number of indubitably genuine productions which are duly edited in the Benares Sanskrit Series, and elsewhere, to say nothing of works hitherto unknown which are frequently discovered in Indian libraries. The present reviewer, who has studied Mr. Bain's writings for a number of years, and specialized to some extent in Sanskrit romance, feels unable to join in the opinion that these stories are not just what they claim to be. At all events, he has repeatedly said that if they are translations, they are wonderfully good; if they are original, they are still more marvellous.

Strictly Business. By O. Henry. New York: Doubleday, Page & Co.

Twenty-three new stories from the unsleeping pen of our Fielding à la mode—twenty-three racy chapters added to his encyclopædic account of the impudence, the energy, the recklessness, the vulgar loves, the fat and cynical materialism of proletarian America. Such are the themes of these varied

tales, addressed—to quote their maker—"to the man who sits smoking with his Sabbath-slipped feet on another chair, and to the woman who snatches the paper for a moment while boiling greens or a narcotized baby leaves her free." It is difficult to understand why this Sabbath sybarite and this troubled housewife do not prefer Boccaccio and the "Arabian Nights," unless they hold with Lucretius that it is sweet to contemplate from the window of a skyscraper the roaring tumult of Broadway. The reeking realism of the presentation is, contrary to received theories, rather intensified than diminished by O. Henry's growing fondness for commenting on his characters, his style, and the conduct of his plot. He appears to be spurning technique in the interest of the facts that come pelting at him. He obviously finds the much-advocated pure objectivity of the short-story something of a nuisance when he wishes to converse with his readers. Frequently hovering on the borders of philosophic digression, in "A Night in New Arabia" he steps boldly into a little essay on modern rich men, admirable for its nice distinctions: "The capitalist can tell you to a dollar the amount of his wealth. The Trust magnate 'estimates' it. The rich malefactor hands you a cigar and denies that he has bought the P., D. & Q. [superb characterization!] The caliph merely smiles and talks about Hammerstein and the musical lasses."

With a satirist carrying such a quiver, it is pleasant to tarry by the way-side and applaud his marksmanship. The stories in this volume show the glaring inequalities of verve and invention to be expected of a writer who exacts of his art the regular and diurnal fecundity of the journalistic Muse. But among several yarns betraying strain and pedestrian inspiration there are three or four of first-rate quality: the title story, "A Night in New Arabia," "Proof of the Pudding," and, perhaps best of all, "A Municipal Report." In the last, with the article on Nashville, Tennessee, from Rand & McNally doing strange service as ironical Greek chorus, he produces a little tragic drama of decayed Southern gentility, proving, in defiance of Frank Norris, that New York, New Orleans, and San Francisco do not monopolize the romance of real life. The effect is novel, and the pleasure is dependent upon the intrinsic interest of the matter as well as upon the artifice of presentation. Such work makes the reader hope that O. Henry may sometime have leisure to do his best more frequently.

Hopalong Cassidy. By Clarence E. Mulford. Chicago: A. C. McClurg & Co.

In this narrative of cowboy life in the arid Southwest, Cassidy of the saltatorial prenomens is hero only by

courtesy. Half-a-dozen of his fellow-ranchmen speak as much, ride as hard, and shoot as frequently and as effectively as Cassidy. It was only the exigencies of the novelist's trade that impelled our writer to pitch upon one of the large number of cow-punchers that crowd his pages and make Cassidy the recipient of the hitherto untried affections of the pretty young daughter of the foreman of the ranch of which Cassidy's own ranch was the neighbor and rival. After a few tentative bits of love-making our author throws the girl frankly overboard, and sets out to tell how a handful of stout-hearted cowboys besieged a band of cattle-thieves on top of an inaccessible mesa. This part of the book has a sort of primitive interest. But until this part is reached, the story does not move at all, but hops along amidst a great deal of gun-play and local slang. There are indications that the writer has worked from close personal observation, and his talk is somewhat more natural than the average brand of Far Western dialects. But the treatment is amateurish and confused.

The Personal Conduct of Belinda. By Eleanor Hoyt Brainerd. New York: Doubleday, Page & Co.

An amiably silly story of a tour in Europe personally conducted by an enslaving young woman whose senior partner is at the eleventh hour prevented from taking her accustomed post. The composition of the party, its inter-relations, and international adventures, are mere farce. Yet gleams of England, Touraine, and Brittany, however fleeting, bring the inevitable, inalienable charm which covers a multitude of farces. The school-girl view of sight-seeing is worthily caricatured at the hands of the pink-and-white Amelia; but the rest of the comic relief does not conspicuously relieve. Nevertheless, in the foolish unreasoning hour a worse companion may be found than this book of improbable characters and impossible situations. To read it is aviation, but no bones are broken.

A HISTORY OF KENTUCKY.

Kentucky in the Nation's History. By Robert McNutt McElroy. New York: Moffat, Yard & Co. \$5 net.

Since this book represents, in the language of Professor McElroy, "a conscious departure from the customary method of dealing with State history," it is but fair that the theory upon which it has been constructed should be stated in the author's own words:

The real aim of the study of State history, as I conceive it, should be to add to our knowledge of the nation, as the day for the cultivation of a purely local patriotism—if, indeed, that day ever existed—has passed forever. To write of the history

of a State as though it were something apart from the nation is not only to violate the "unity of history," but also to deprive the nation of a valuable source of information concerning national events.

Conceding, as we readily do, that the writing of State history has too often proceeded upon antiquarian rather than historical lines, and that the affairs of the nation must always possess a larger interest than those of any of its constituent members, we nevertheless are compelled to think that the dictum above quoted not only fails to give the whole truth of the matter, but also involves some confusion of thought. For one thing, it implies, with almost brutal frankness, a degree of centralization *in posse* which, thank Heaven, has not yet come about even in these days of expanding Federal power. Moreover, so long as the American Union is constituted as it is, the several States composing it will continue to enjoy the right to lead lives not wholly overshadowed by the life of the nation; nor will they, we think, be deterred from doing so by fear lest thereby they "cultivate a purely local patriotism." Unless, then, the conception of "national" history is to be given such unusual extension as to make it include a summary of all that is going on in all the States at any given time—an extension which would obviously make the writing of the history of a federal government almost insuperably difficult—there will always be this parallel progression of nation and State; and the historian, bound to record what he finds rather than what he fancies ought to be, will not deem it necessary to depreciate the one in order to exalt the other.

Further, Professor McElroy seems not to have apprehended clearly the relation of an American State to the life of the nation of which it forms a part. A State is always played upon by two forces. On the one side is the nation, drawing it, whether it will or will not, into the current of national progress, moulding its thought and conduct by the silent power of a common law and a common opportunity, and commanding, at critical moments, its almost exclusive allegiance. On the other side is a host of purely local circumstances, not only dissociated in the public mind from concern for the national welfare, but also, as it happens, expressly reserved for State consideration by the Federal Constitution. Professor McElroy seems to regard the former of these two influences as the only one really worth while; unmindful of the fact, seen only the more clearly as the history of the States comes to be studied, that it is the condition of the public mind bred by local experiences and needs, quite as much as any public opinion developed by contact with the national life, that determines the fundamental attitude of a State towards national issues.