

regard railway nationalization as expedient.

Mr. Morris's book on "Railroad Administration" has little to do with problems of regulation, but is rather a consideration of the railway as a working machine. Yet mention of it in this connection is not out of place, for in many ways its clear analysis of railway methods is an answer to the charges so carelessly made by Mr. Van Wagenen. When one follows in detail the extraordinary organization which has been built up to do the work of transportation, the efforts now making to improve the physical conditions of the properties, and the various methods of cost-keeping and of statistical comparison that have been devised to promote efficiency of operation, and then compares the conduct of this industry with that of a government bureau or investigating commission, with its wasteful use of public funds—a condition familiar to all who have come into contact with governmental methods in this country—one is amazed to find a writer like Van Wagenen advocating government ownership because of our "crude, disorganized, unscientific system of railways." A careful reading of Mr. Morris's chapter on Control through Statistics, one of the best in the book, should effectually dispose of that indictment.

The book is evidently intended as a manual for those who are engaged in railway service or who desire to enter it. It is a weakness of present day railway organization that the rank and file know only the work of their own department, and are almost entirely ignorant of the industry as a whole. This volume should give them the point of view from which they will be able to correlate their duties with those of their fellows in the organization of which they are a part. Largely of a descriptive character, the treatise opens with a chapter on the physical and financial beginnings of a railway, and continues with discussions of railway organization on large and small roads, on British railways, and on the government-owned roads of Germany, Italy, and India. In another chapter, that on financial organization, attention is given to the various kinds of securities issued. The author does not believe in the control of capitalization, and maintains that capitalization and rates have no relation to one another. Commissions, he thinks, are not likely to accomplish any permanent useful effects, and the result of endowing them with rate-making power will be to keep rates at a higher level than they would be if unregulated. The only beneficial effect of such bodies is in their function as safety-valves for popular indignation. While we may not agree with this somewhat extreme position, we can endorse the author's contention that the recent pop-

ular uprising against the railways was largely due to railway blundering, and that a more consistent effort to conciliate, rather than antagonize, would do much to remove the source of popular discontent. The volume is supplied with many charts, illustrating various forms of railway organization.

CURRENT FICTION.

John Winterbourne's Family. By Alice Brown. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co.

Miss Brown's world is inexhaustibly peopled with original characters which defy classification under any ordinary rules. From simple to subtle they range, but perhaps her forte is the exposition of the subtle in the seeming simple. No person is too insignificant outwardly to take a part in her drama, and the part is always a complex one because every human being is a complicated being. The sweeping of a hearth, the polishing of a table, the caprice of a child, the mood of a woman, are affairs of portent. Events are seldom exciting, yet one reads with almost gasping interest, breathing an air thick with the weight of small but immensely significant affairs. Her characters often are not in the least like any whom one has met, but they move with an authority no more to be disputed than that of the creatures of mythology. There is, indeed, not a little of the mythological in Miss Brown's New Englander.

John Winterbourne seeking to evade the "Tyranny of Things," and to sit by his fireside reading Theocritus, is at once a simple, single-hearted man, and a great, striving, resisting, natural force. Mrs. Ramsay, leaving her children daily while she lectures on causes, is no mere Mrs. Jellyby, but a faulty humanitarian on a large scale. Bess, daughter of earth, sweeping, cooking, ministering, is a domesticated Valkyr. Little happens throughout the story that is not homely, but the way in which it happens gives it profound and universal meaning. No need to sketch the plot. It deals with nothing more thrilling outwardly than domestic incompatibilities and the patenting of an ear-trumpet. But to the inner man it makes fervent appeal with its insight into human relations and its silent plea for right living and for strict attention to one's "job," however little time it leaves one for reading Theocritus. It is a noteworthy book, homelier but higher than "Rose MacLeod."

Pan's Mountain. By Amélie Rives. New York: Harper & Bros.

This tale owes its unusual and very palpable atmosphere to the strangely endowed heroine at its centre. Dione, although of modern birth, is a pagan. The mingling of Servian and Italian blood

in her veins inclines her to regard, and, more, to feel, the old deities of whom her father told her, as real, and she pours midnight libations to the god, except for her unworshipped, whose haunt she fancies to be on the lake-guarded height, which she has rechristened Pan's Mountain. This intellectual unconventionality reappears in her unqualified frankness. But, however strange, she is never unreal. Exalted happiness and unfathomable bitterness find expression in words and actions that are consonant with her direct, elemental nature. As a creation of fiction, especially of recent fiction, Dione is refreshingly individual. Her few fellow-actors on the narrow stage are not dimly drawn, but none of them can vie with her in compelling the interest of their auditors. Adverse criticism must content itself with pointing out faults of style, and here it cannot be gainsaid that the author is decidedly overfond of the simile, which produces a slight effect of monotony. An odd error is the use of a form of "lay" for one of "lie," which occurs twice.

The Caravaners. By the author of "Elizabeth and Her German Garden." New York: Doubleday, Page & Co.

This author's specialties, as her readers well know, are Man, Prussia, and above all, Prussian Man. She has approached or rather attacked them from many points, and now she surpasses herself in ingenuity by choosing as the sally-port for her onslaught the mouth of Prussian Man himself. Baron von Ottringel, major of a Prussian artillery regiment, conceives the idea of celebrating by a journey the twenty-fifth anniversary of his marriage. True, his silver-wedding wife has been dead for some years, but the institution has persisted with a negligible twelve months' forced interruption. Surely the Major was right in his reply to the later wife who questioned its being "their" silver-wedding. He tells the tale himself:

"Dear wife," I retorted, surprised, "you know very well that it is mine, and what is mine is also by law yours, and that, therefore, without the least admissible logical doubt, it is yours."

The trip leads the Baron and his wife with a few friends to "caravaning" in England. For a moment, one expects a cheerful gypsying story with adventures and scenery and the international picnic touch. Instead of this, it is a protracted, unconscious confession of unbroken caddishness from one properly characterized by a fellow camper as "a very grievous bounder." He is insufferable in every direction; conspicuously so in all that concerns the differences between his own country and England; most of all in the relation of any Prussian husband to any wife. What with bad weather, bad roads, insufficient food, and an occasionally in-

subordinate wife, the warlike Major had a sorry trip. And truth to tell, although the self-revelation is at points amusing, particularly in those moments when the Baron is in the act of violently not taking a joke, four hundred pages of ill-natured caricature must needs pall.

The Court of Lucifer. By Nathan Gallizier. Boston: L. C. Page & Co.

Mr. Gallizier's picture of the Rome of the Borgias is huge, confused, and hideous. All the notorious crimes of Cesare Borgia, all the licentious excesses and voluptuous festivities of the papal court, all the turbulent political and military activities of sixteenth-century Italy, though resolutely pressed down and shaken together, still amount to rather more than a fair bookful. The author finds his pretext for this exhibition of horrors in vindicating the character of the maligned Lucrezia, enlarging and wresting to this purpose an authentically recorded incident. In negotiating the fifth marriage of his fair daughter, Pope Alexander VI met with considerable resistance on the part of the prospective bridegroom, Alfonso of Este, whose aversion had been aroused by Lucrezia's evil reputation and the fate of her former husbands. Only when she reached Castle Bentivoglio, the last stage of her nuptial progress from Rome to Ferrara, did he visit her—in disguise—then seeing her for the first time. By this tardy interview his reluctance seems to have been immediately and permanently dispelled, and his subsequently justified faith in the lady's innocence established.

In the present version Alfonso is represented as coming to Rome in the guise of a Knight Hospitaller (there is also a tournament reminiscent of Ivanhoe) to investigate for himself the foundation of Lucrezia's ill-fame. Through an incredible profusion of nocturnal adventure in grotto, grove, subterranean passage, dungeon, banquet hall, catacombs, deserted convent, and lady's bower, he arrives at an impassioned conviction of Lucrezia's spotless innocence, and a complete insight into the monstrous machinations of her fell brother, Cesare.

The Scourge. By Warrington Dawson. New York: Small, Maynard & Co.

A powerfully written story of the South during the Reconstruction period. The hero, the adopted son of the only rich man in the community, is a street waif who saves his employer's life by quick wit, and is literally picked from the slums. The elder man, also risen from the ranks, tries to raise the boy, to fill his place, but the hero refuses all refining influences, until he falls in love with a Southern girl of the oldest family in the town, and imbued with all the prejudices that would imply. Even

then he does not try to change except by giving up the fortune his father has left, conditional on his not marrying. With all his lack of breeding he manages to leave a powerful impression, while the slim, well-bred heroine fades into misty lines. The book is well written, with the exception of occasional dialogues between the heroine and the mother, but these are not frequent.

The Prodigal Pro Tem. By Frederick Orin Bartlett. Boston: Small, Maynard & Co.

Mr. Bartlett has written a diverting and somewhat original tale, with a fair measure of bright dialogue. The scene is laid in the Catskills and concerns a woman and two men, one of whom is an artist, the other a musician. To save a blind man's life and reason the artist plays the rôle of the prodigal son who has refused to return home, and the complications that ensue are numerous and humorously related. The author's characters act like human beings, and, in spite of her sharp tongue, one cannot help liking Aunt Philomela and understanding how Eleanor, with her charming manner, proved to be an inspiration both to the artist who longed to paint her, and to the musician who felt that only with her could he write his best songs and symphonies. It is a book one finishes with regret, for it contains nothing disagreeable and much to amuse.

A GREAT PUBLISHER.

Life and Letters of Alexander Macmillan. By Charles L. Graves. New York: The Macmillan Co. \$3.50 net.

Mr. Graves had a plain tale to tell and he has told it somewhat drily. Nevertheless his book is profoundly interesting. The success achieved by the Macmillans was far from the ordinary rise of the canny Scot. It could not have been achieved without commercial ability, but still less could it have been achieved by commercial ability alone. Its history involves a good deal of the history of English ideas in the nineteenth century, and Daniel and Alexander Macmillan have a clear title to a place among the honorable company of great publishers. They had, of course, being Scots, a remarkable mother. "My mother," wrote Alexander to Guizot, "was a woman of very devout nature and habits, whose daily life was, as I believe, lived as in the conscious presence of God. She had a very noble, sweet nature, and a certain serenity and sweetness of mind that I have hardly ever met with in any other human being." Amid the drudgery of bringing up a numerous family with scanty means, she found time to read. There is a tradition that a visitor calling on her in her old age found her in bed with

her black mutch on her head, reading Cary's Dante. The excellent father, as is also common in remarkable Scotch families, occupied the humble subsidiary position of St. Joseph. "From her," wrote Daniel, "we take any mental superiority we may have."

Alexander's meagre schooling ceased when he was fifteen. From that time, he earned his own living, such as it was, and, in 1843, when he was twenty-five years old, he formed a partnership with his brother Daniel, and opened the retail book-shop in Cambridge at No. 1 Trinity Street, which presently became famous as a kind of literary centre for the university. Dr. Sebastian Evans, who was an undergraduate of Emmanuel College in the early fifties, gives a picture of Alexander Macmillan's relations with the students:

During my undergraduateship at Emmanuel not a single one of my supposed instructors, from first to last, ever betrayed the faintest indication of any interest in me personally. . . . The men of light and leading in the college were few, and, so far as the ordinary undergraduates were concerned, they neither lighted nor led. . . . Most of the students socially belonging to the middle class went up to college as a necessary preliminary to entering holy orders. It was among these candidates for future ordination that I regard Alec's influence as having been at once most powerfully and most beneficially exercised. Here was a born teacher and preacher about a dozen years older than themselves, a man of striking and varied gifts, of shrewd insight and large experience, always sympathetically interested in young men at the outset of life who came to him for intellectual guidance and help. . . . For many a year after I had left Cambridge, in listening to a preacher unknown to me, his use of some tell-tale catch-word or turn of thought would identify him to me as having at some time or other come under Macmillan's influence, and more than once or twice I was afterwards able to verify my inference. . . . The gap left open between teachers and taught at Cambridge was filled only by a Scot, not in holy orders and in no way connected with the educational arrangements of the university.

The purchase of the Cambridge shop was made possible by a loan of £500 from Archdeacon Hare, made at Hare's own instance. Daniel Macmillan had read Hare's "Guesses at Truth," in 1840, and had written to the author to express his interest. Hare was impressed by his admirer's intelligence and not only helped to set him up in business, but introduced him to Maurice. When the brothers ventured into publishing a few years later, Maurice became one of their earliest and most valuable authors, valuable not only for the influence of his own books and the reputation they brought the firm, but for his friendly service in introducing other authors, of whom Kingsley was probably the chief. In 1862, J. R. Green wrote to a friend, "Pray introduce me to Macmillan, if such a thing be possi-