

pect that is rarely the portion of a well-known novelist's following. As Miguel Jesus Maria de Sarda y Boegas sets forth upon his journey, we are touched with astonishment. Do history—and Mr. Snaith—thus repeat themselves, and, be it whispered, with none too much originality in the repetition? Here begins, apparently, the ordinary swashbuckling romance, and with more than a casual tang of Hewlett in its composition. The setting is strongly reminiscent of "The Spanish Jade," the young hero is blood-brother to "The Fool Errant," and surely Sir Richard Pendragon, as he first appears, is only another of the many disguises of Brazenhead the Great. It is not long, however, before the reader realizes that the smile of "Araminta" has swelled into Homeric laughter, and that this is a notable piece of burlesque. Perplexity dispelled, the book is food for hearty enjoyment. Mr. Snaith revels in not unloving caricature of his early gods, and the result is as delightful in its own way as Hichens's memorable explosion of "The Londoners." The figure of the English giant assumes at times a vigor beyond the merely farcical: he is of the kin of Bardolph, Nym, and Pistol, with a dash of Porthos, and the visit of the three soldiers of fortune to the French court is of a quality to linger in the memory. Fortune is indeed the liege lady of these adventurers; the "sweet baggage with the moist lip and the enkindling eye," and Pendragon strikes their keynote when he cries, "To Fortune will we wet our beards, good Spaniard, for we of England court her like a maiden with a dimple in her cheek." This proud and capricious Princess, invested for the purposes of romance with the winsome if somewhat choleric flesh and blood of the Countess Sylvia, touches a chord of truth at the climax of the tale, when she turns from all her suitors to woo the careless and masterful Pendragon, only to be consigned to the arms of another by that "Captain-General of the Jogalones"; but the delight of the book is to be found rather in its obvious mirth than in its subtle philosophy.

The Silent Call. By Edwin Milton Royle.
New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

Reading this novel is like witnessing a spirited play. Much of the dialogue, most of the situations, and all the cues for entrances and exits bear the impress of the dramatist's art. The half-Indian son of the Earl of Kerhill—known to Mr. Royle's public as "The Squaw Man" of an earlier work—has grown to maturity and figures in these pages as Harold Calthorpe. Like the father, the son is obliged to leave England for reasons not really discreditable, and the "silent call" of the wild strain in his blood lures him to the home of his mother's people. The tribal reserva-

tion is so faithfully described in its natural aspects, and such liberties are taken with the names of local celebrities, that no one acquainted with northeastern Utah can be deceived by its thin disguise. Against this scene we find grouped as *dramatis personæ* a scheming agent; an unscrupulous trader who helps him to his ends; an army officer, brave, but sadly fettered by departmental red-tape; a bluff mining prospector and his gang; an intrepid ranch-boss; a beautiful Indian maiden, beset by lovers both red and white; and a right-minded but wholly unconventional parson. Summoned back to England by news of his father's illness, Harold has a chance, of which advantage is cleverly taken for the reader's profit, to contrast the freedom of the frontier with the artificialities of an advanced civilization; of course, unfavorably to the latter.

Under the romantic surface of this and the earlier story, Mr. Royle has given us not only an excellent picture of the untamed West, but also a glimpse of his own philosophy on the race question. In spite of an occasional resort to theatrical methods, he has set forth admirably the serious side of attempting to change the Indian into something non-Indian through the influence of an alien environment.

The Rust of Rome. By Warwick Deeping. New York: Cassell & Co., Ltd.

For the reader who likes to be kept on the shivery edge of apprehension in an atmosphere of vast tragic portent blended with illimitable detail, Mr. Deeping is the man. The magnified episode is the note of the book, although a definite story runs in and out among the episodes. The reader is asked to be interested in Benjamin Heriot's every step, from the prison life he is quitting on the first page to the last incident on the four hundredth. His morals, manners, tastes, pursuits, clothes are offered with a confidence in the reader's interest which is almost naïve. The reader meanwhile forges along, enduring repetition for the sake of many merits on the way and in anticipation of the supposed final tying up of threads. The end is complete and seems to satisfy the actors. But it may be doubted whether violence undetected, even violence in a good cause, will ever become a popular marriage portion for hero and heroine of a romance.

Benjamin Heriot for an hour's irresponsibility paid the heavy penalty of two years in Reading gaol. Once more free, he is near to wrecking himself a second time from sheer reaction. In his self-disgust, he is meditating suicide when chance sends him on a Sunday morning into a beech forest. Under the spell of the trees, he is seized by a passion for Nature and finds himself taking heart. He buys a piece of English woodland, builds a shelter, digs, plants,

and grows sane. The attempt to escape humanity, however, is vain. Men, boys, women, and a woman spring up in the wilderness. The author's touch in describing the forest atmosphere is that of a lover, and the earth is made no less fascinating to the antiquarian than to the agriculturist. Characterization is also a marked accomplishment of the writer. His portraits are in the round, anatomy and covering both well-considered. Not a figure, great or small, that does not have its being in its own individual way.

The Professional Aunt. By Mary C. E. Wemyss. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co.

The "Helen's Babies" order of fiction is, it seems, not yet superannuated. Indeed, the irrepressible infant is an inexhaustible theme. The "professional aunt" of the present book is, of course, the person who sees the funny things done and hears the funny speeches made by the particular urchins who are to be exploited. The author, Mrs. Wemyss, is an Englishwoman who has written one or two other books about children. That kind of thing has not been done so much in England as with us, and is still rather stiffly done. The humor of Mrs. Wemyss is over-broad and self-conscious for the American taste. She begins with a definition of the Professional Aunt, as the spinster from whom devotion to her nephews and nieces is exacted as a primary duty. Then she introduces the particular children with whom the particular aunt is implicated, and the series of infantile exploits and "bright sayings" begins. It must be confessed that the point of a large majority of the sayings is due to their happy childish indelicacy. Of course, the random speech of an innocent child can sail far closer to the wind than the considered and actionable utterances of your barnacle-crusted adult. But there is, after all, a limit to the enjoyment of a voyage under these conditions. The fun of little Johnny's conception of religion and little Sally's notion of motherhood are capable of exhaustion. The perfunctory "love interest" injected into these artless pages is quite helpless to turn a congeries of anecdotes into a real story.

CRETAN DISCOVERY.

Scripta Minoa. The written documents of Minoan Crete, with special reference to the archives of Knossos. By Arthur J. Evans. Vol. I. Pp. xiv+302, with 13 plates and many illustrations in the text. New York: Henry Frowde. \$12.75 net.

The art of prehistoric Crete has of recent years become known in such a way as to afford a wonderfully vivid picture of the life on that island well into the third millennium before our

era. So far as it is possible to know an ancient people without an understanding of their own written records, we may now be said to know the ancient Cretans really well, for we have the material setting of life among them in uncommon completeness. There has come to light also the fact that for above a thousand years an evolution in the art of writing was going on. The characters used show a change from conventionalized pictorial forms to those of earlier and later linear types. Moreover, the most advanced type of linear script (Evans's Class B) reaches a high stage of development, while even the latest manifestations of it are considerably earlier than the earliest records of Phœnician writing. When one remembers that only a short time ago the consideration of the antiquity of writing played an important part in discussions of the Homeric question, it is possible to realize how greatly in this respect the present point of view has changed. Furthermore, with these Cretan discoveries, the source whence the Greeks took the characters of their alphabet becomes comparatively a less simple matter to explain. Has not the part the Phœnicians played in the transmission of the letters been too exclusively emphasized? Is there not a large element of truth in the old traditions given by Diodorus that letters were invented in Crete, and that the Phœnicians merely modified them and passed them on, or may it not be that some knowledge of the Cretan script was transmitted directly to the Greek settlers there?

It would indeed be difficult to enumerate the interesting questions which recent discoveries in this wonderful island have raised for students both of prehistoric and of Greek archæology; but the answers to these questions must in many cases depend upon the nature of the language used by the early Cretans, and touching this point we are still largely in the dark. In the absence of bilingual inscriptions, as Dr. Evans remarks in his preface, a comprehensive attempt at interpretation or transliteration is not likely to be attended with fruitful results, but this fact makes it none the less an urgent need that scholars should have before them in as complete a form as possible the existing records of the early Cretan script. This need will be adequately met in the present handsome publication.

The whole work is planned in three volumes: the first includes the hieroglyphic and primitive linear classes of writing, together with some general discussion of pre-Phœnician scripts; the second and third will be given to a detailed publication of the documents of the advanced linear scripts. The whole will therefore constitute a *corpus* of the early Cretan written documents. In Part i of the first volume, Dr. Evans gives an exceedingly useful survey of his

whole subject, taking up the question of the antiquity and diffusion of pictographs and linear signs in Europe, the discovery and the nature of each of the types of Minoan writing, the survivals of the art of writing as the different phases of Cretan civilization pass away, and the influence that this art had in other regions. This leads to a discussion of the Cretan Philistines and the Phœnician alphabet, and to a statement of the theory that this alphabet is to an important degree of Minoan origin. The various tables of illustration supplement the text in a most valuable way. Part ii is devoted to a careful and complete presentation of the hieroglyphic or conventionalized pictographic script. The influences under which it grew up are discussed, and its use on seals and clay documents. Then follows an extended catalogue of hieroglyphic inscriptions on seals and sealings, and one of similar nature for inscriptions on clay sealings, tablets, bars, etc. There is further a catalogue of the hieroglyphic signs, and an analysis with extended discussion of the nature of the script. Part iii is a study of the so-called Disk from Phæstos, discovered by Dr. Pernier of the Italian Mission, in 1908. This is the largest single hieroglyphic inscription yet discovered in Crete, and its nature is, of course, of high interest. Dr. Evans subjects its signs to a searching examination, showing how radically in most cases they differ from the Minoan classes, and coming to the conclusion that the script is the product of a culture allied to the Minoan, but "existing on the southwest coastlands of Asia Minor and not improbably in the Lycian area." At the present stage of our knowledge any interpretation can hardly be more than an interesting suggestion, for one cannot be certain how exactly the original form of a hieroglyphic character indicates its meaning at a given time. It seems as if a bilingual inscription was the only thing which could possibly clear away the uncertainties. Nevertheless, a surprising amount of information about the probable contents of the writings, both hieroglyphic and linear, is scattered through the volume. A decimal system was in use in both, and, especially in Class B of the linear script, it is possible to make out the enumeration of various classes of objects stored in the chambers of the palace. The arrangement of the clay tablets was often very careful, and they were sometimes placed like books on a modern shelf, so that the edges showed; then the edge would be docketed with a summary of contents.

It is superfluous to add that the book as a whole is of high importance—the careful record of a considerable part of the extraordinarily able archæological work which has placed Dr. Evans in the front rank of really great discoverers.

Charles Sumner. By George H. Haynes (American Crisis Biographies). Philadelphia: George W. Jacobs & Co. \$1.25 net.

Except Lincoln, no statesman of our civil war period has been so elaborately commemorated as Sumner. We have the fifteen volumes of his works, edited by himself, the four bulky volumes of memoirs by E. L. Pierce, the biography by Moorfield Storey in the American Statesmen Series, and less considerable accounts in large number. Professor Haynes thinks it worth while to add to the list a new life, not at all claiming to add fresh material, but undertaking to adjust the figure properly in the perspective, after the lapse of a momentous half-century. Professor Haynes is thoroughly informed and an excellent narrator; while strongly sympathetic, he is by no means indiscriminating; he does not blink the faults of his hero's character or the mistakes of his career. Nevertheless, we feel that he accords Sumner a place among the statesmen of his time which he did not hold, and which in the retrospect of history he never will hold.

Professor Haynes adopts from another the statement that "at the close of the civil war Abraham Lincoln and Charles Sumner were the most influential men in public life." Lincoln's eminence no one will question, but as to Sumner? Did he outrank in influence the great military figures? or, if we restrict our view to civil life, did he stand before the country so superior in wisdom and service to Chase, Seward, Stanton, and Charles Francis Adams? Good men in those days believed Sumner to be intrepid, untiring, well-purposed, and adorned with statesmanlike accomplishments; but they also believed that he gravely lacked patience; also the sagacity for measuring accurately great and difficult problems and dealing with them wisely in view of their relations with other problems and with the facts of human nature; also, the invaluable quality of tact, the faculty for getting on with men and winning out in the welter of varying temperaments, clashing judgments, and conflicting interests. Conspicuous though the service of Sumner was, we yet believe that in many contemporary eyes his leadership had the handicap of these unfortunate limitations; that his work, therefore, in behalf of his country and of humanity was far less effective than that of Lincoln; indeed, that several among his fellow-strivers were fully his equals in the accomplishment of good results.

While to multitudes of his contemporaries Sumner seemed thus to fall short, indications abound that a later generation is not disposed to judge him more kindly. Ideas are broached to-day by voices of authority which are not in harmony with the views and anticipa-