

hief in the validity of Dr. Cook's figures.

For the northward trip which Capt. Amundsen is planning every one will wish him the success which his pluck, good judgment, and experience presage, and safety from the deadly perils against which, as the sad fate of Capt. Scott too forcibly proves, even these can guarantee no certain immunity.

#### CURRENT FICTION.

*Yonder.* By E. H. Young. New York: George H. Doran Co.

Here is a writer who has something to say, and can say it with sincerity and with imaginative power. If, as the title-page suggests, "*Yonder*" is a first novel, it gives promise of great things. It defies classification. In its strange detachment from social backgrounds, and in the directness of its imaginative appeal, it suggests Charlotte Brontë. In its pregnancy of phrase and flashes of insight into character, it recalls Meredith. It conveys a remarkably intimate and vivid sense of outdoor nature, especially of mountains:

He marched on until the hills drew more closely round him. . . . In the perfection of impulse they swept upwards from the valley, and it was amazing that the dark and stunted yews round the little church, the scattered houses and the grazing cattle should have been allowed to keep the places men had given them, for the curves of the mountain's mysterious sides had the fatality of a wave.

But the characters are not subdued to the natural background; they are not the playthings of fate. Alexander, the child of the mountains, threatened by an evil destiny, but strong enough to conquer it; Edward Webb, the mild little travelling salesman, with the heart of a poet; Theresa, his daughter, with her swift moods and vivid humanity, a girl to dream of; these are only the central figures in a group of real and living men and women.

The one serious weakness of the story is the conclusion: here are signs of crudity and immaturity. But it will be fairer to let the reader judge of that matter for himself.

*The Port of Dreams.* By Miriam Alexander. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons.

While the action of this story is definitely assigned to the years 1744-47, the reader is not asked to march with Bonnie Prince Charlie from Edinburgh to Culloden, or otherwise to participate in the more decisive events of '45. Instead he is acquainted with certain Irish Jacobites in their efforts to secure to the depleted Stuart exchequer a diamond necklace of fabulous value. The casket containing this wondrous "bauble" has washed up on the Galway coast, a cen-

tury and a half after it had gone down with a galleon of the Spanish Armada. From the moment of its discovery until its final inexplicable disappearance, its custodianship entails endless alarms and dangers. Official pursuit in Ireland, private intrigue in France, are equally unremitting. The chief sufferer on this account is a gentleman who, having grown gray in King James's service—a champion revered by the Pretender's young adherents and a shining mark for Hanoverian arrows—late in life, finds himself grievously embarrassed by the loss of his courage. An all but successful attempt at assassination, followed by an uncommonly painful recovery, had left John Clavering permanently incapacitated for facing sword play or the crack of fire-arms. From the disgrace of this singular mischance he is protected by the chivalry of his young comrade-in-arms, Denis O'Gara. This Irish Don Quixote surrenders to the disabled hero his own reputation for bravery, together with the hope of winning a certain fair lady to whom the Cause is more than any mere suitor, and finally goes to the scaffold in his stead, lest the public display of Clavering's weakness should shame them all.

Such a psychological complication as Clavering's incapacity introduces, consorts rather oddly with the atmosphere and style of adventure prescribed by tradition for the Jacobite romance. The plot, glimmering and inconsecutive in its total impression, manages to include hairbreadth escapes and state-ly gallantries in about equal proportions. It even introduces as the young Pretender a puppet-like presence, credited with much wanton perverseness and ingratitude behind the scenes. Better than the narrative one enjoys bits of Irish landscape rather poetically described, and the occasional passages in which the author turns from her story to plead the misfortunes and sing the general praises of the gallant Irish gentlemen of the eighteenth century.

*The Dragoman.* By George K. Stiles. New York: Harper & Bros.

Randall, Englishman and Egyptologist; Hilken, American dealer in second-hand rifles; Elizabeth, his daughter; Major Talbot, of the Upper Nile; Zanda Pasha, villainous Turk; a supposed dragoman, really a prince and "Mollah of Konia"; a dancing girl: these are the chief persons in this (we gather) thrilling romance. Randall is young, and even more handsome than learned. He has spent much time in native disguise, learning the manners and the tongues of Egypt and Islam. He has made the three pilgrimages of the faithful, and is initiate in the innermost mysteries of the Moslem cult. This is just as well, considering what Mr. Stiles expects of

him. For he not only has to kill the Mollah of Konia, to embalm him, in the cabin of a Nile steamer, and to stow him away in a mummy-case which happens to be at hand: given an enemy and a mummy-case, this is what any spirited young Egyptologist might do. Randall's real feat is in impersonating the Mollah, the expected deliverer of Islam, putting himself at the head of the plot against British rule, and only disclosing his identity at the moment which is most convenient for Mr. Stiles. The Nile steamer in which the Mollah becomes a mummy is carrying rifles into the Blue Nile country, ostensibly for Abyssinia, but really for the followers of the Mollah. Randall is aboard not only on England's account, but on beautiful Elizabeth Hilken's. They make a sensational delivery of small-arms through the falls of the Blue Nile. There the faithful, with Zanda Pasha, the villainous Turk, await them. When we note that the Turk covets Elizabeth, that she loves Randall, and that Randall loves both Elizabeth and the dancing girl, it will be perceived that heart-interest is not stinted. However, a plague is introduced to kill off superfluous people, including the fatuous Hilken and the dancing girl, and Randall is free to rescue the other maiden of his heart. The eventual discovery that the man she loves is not a dragoman, or even a prince of Asiatic blood, but a fine young Englishman and budding Governor of Upper Egypt, is pleasant for Elizabeth.

*Dew and Mildew: Semi-detached Stories from Karabad, India.* By Percival Christopher Wren. New York: Longmans, Green & Co.

The author of these striking stories evidently is, or has been, connected with the British department of education in India. A fly-leaf credits him with several books on teaching in India, but the evidence is hardly needed. Throughout the tales which make up this volume runs a vein of comment on Indian school-methods. The hero of the book, so far as it has one, is the English master of a school for natives in Karabad; and the villain is an ignorant M.P. who has come to India to make trouble, in the schools and elsewhere. This unspeakable person the author, in the end, joyfully hoists with his own petard—hoists not only out of India, but out of life altogether, to the great content of the reader. To the schoolmaster is awarded that grand prize of the Anglo-Indian, a legacy enabling him to turn his face towards Home.

But apart from this contrasted pair and the events and interests which concern them, an altogether distinct motive runs through these tales—two of them, in fact. One may call them the Phantom Rickshaw motive and the Wee Willie Winkie motive, without meaning to

imply that they have been lifted from Kipling. The clash of skeptical Occident with ghostly Orient, and the pathetic figure of the English child in unnatural and unwholesome surroundings, are themes which belong to all Anglo-Indian literature. They are effectively mingled here. Behind the happy activities of the members of the "Junior Curlton Club" of Karabad lies the waiting shadow of an Eastern curse which we know is not to be balked of its innocent victim. The scene of the ghostly action is known as "Sudden-Death Lodge." Under a certain pipal tree in Karabad an old fakir has sat and worshipped after his fashion for fifty years. A rich native dislodges him, uproots the tree, and builds a fine house on the spot. The fakir dies, cursing the house and all who may dwell in it. A series of fatalities follows, which the chronicler does not profess to explain—"Coincidence, no doubt: but coincidences are many—east of Suez." Sudden-Death Lodge changes hands many times; there is always some person, bold, or careless, or simply skeptical, to find advantage in its absurdly small rental—and, sooner or later, to pay the penalty. The grim, matter-of-fact manner of the story-teller intensifies the grewsomeness of his tale, which is fashioned for those who have hairs to stand and flesh to creep.

#### A GERMAN IN AMERICA.

*Amerika—heute und morgen: Reise-erlebnisse von Arthur Holitscher.* Berlin: S. Fischer & Co.

Some years ago the late Von Polenz visited America in a quiet, unheralded way and gave us a dignified and impartial account of American conditions and problems, in the volume entitled "Das Land der Zukunft." And now another German poet, going about his work in much the same way, has produced a notable book. The writing is delightfully unconventional and direct. The author is enthusiastic about the general spirit and atmosphere of the American democracy, but is indignant over practices and institutions which flatly contradict the original ideals of that democracy.

Among the cursory notes jotted down after his arrival in New York during the hot spell of the summer of 1911, is a protest against skyscrapers, against billboards and electrical signs. He resents having a cocoa-drinking baby of colossal proportions, the latest pugilistic sensation, or other equally elated images thrust at him from the sky. Deciding to forget all æsthetic standards for a while, he wisely reserves his opinion of New York until he can make its acquaintance at a more propitious season, and starts upon a round of visits. The first is to the George Junior Republic in Freeville, in whose founder he recognizes a noble American type, briefly characterizing him as "the right man

to cherish a great sentiment in his heart and to realize it through an idea." He spends an afternoon at East Aurora, fails to find the founder of the famous Roycroft Shop, whose portrait, as he has known it from the magazines and bill-boards, struck him as a type, half-monk, half-Montmartois, and decides that the enterprise itself combines the features of Angelico with those of Bar-num.

Most surprising is Holitscher's account of Chautauqua. He attends an Old First Night in the great amphitheatre, and the eight thousand men and women who have come from all parts of the country to this great democratic summer college convey to him the meaning of Walt Whitman's pet phrase, "en masse." He is astonished at the quality of the lectures and the standing of the lecturers, and arrives at the conclusion that the work of Chautauqua, if thoroughly investigated, would be found to be doing something for the future which was not originally in the programme. In the porter and the lift-man of the Athenæum Hotel, both college men, he welcomes a type exclusively limited to America and utterly impossible in Europe: the student working his way through the university.

Kansas City gave him the first unpleasant shock. A car-ride through the delta of the Blue River, with its sordid shanties, revealed to him features of that prosperous city with which the then uncompleted Child Welfare Exhibition did not reconcile him. He failed to find in it practical object-lessons on the horrors of child labor—a conclusion which was perhaps premature, though it did not detract from the humiliating truth of his remarks on the subject with which he is amazingly familiar.

Chicago, "the city of world-famous warehouses, stock-yards, wheat elevators, and brothels," is to Holitscher "the most horrible place on this globe." He briefly suggests its material and spiritual atmosphere: "Through one nostril you inhale coal dust, through the other the fumes of boiling glue. They combine into a paste which settles on the cerebral membranes, and lo! the Chicago conscience has come into existence." A visit to the stock-yards brings the author face to face with conditions of labor for which there is no parallel in any other country in the world, the age-limit, the artificial stimulation of individual energy, and other features, which fill him with horror at the inhuman exploitation and premature exhaustion of human vitality going on in the industrial life of this country. His condemnation of what he calls the "Taylor System" is likely to be largely quoted in the German press. The impressions are somewhat relieved by a visit to the parks, with their playgrounds, swimming-pools, gymnasiums, libraries, etc.,

which he is surprised to hear are open to everybody without the least formality. Hull House, however, leaves him in a somewhat skeptical attitude. Eliminating the personality of Miss Addams, he regards that enterprise as but a plaster upon a festering sore of the social organism. That the indirect social work done in and through that institution has called attention to urgent social reforms of a more radical nature seems to have escaped Holitscher's otherwise penetrative insight.

Among foreign writers on America this German author is probably the first to give unqualified praise to the American school-marm. He compares these women who bring so much "warmth, kindness, and beauty into the school-room" with the "horde of arrogant tyrants and self-righteous fools" who robbed him of his childhood. He sees only good in the far-reaching influence which education by women and co-education must have upon the American youth. "In the simplest manner the American boy learns to understand the word equality, for where should equality begin unless it be in the establishment of the same legal status for the two sexes of mankind?"

On the author's return to New York the skyscrapers no longer fill him with the horror they at first inspired—he begins to understand the reason for their being. This part of the book contains a very conscientious and judicious survey of the immigration problem on Ellis Island. While other foreign authors have nothing but severe censure for it, Holitscher judges it with comparative mildness. In spite of the human tragedies he witnessed at detention quarters, he gives the immigrant commission the benefit of the doubt. He admits that it is doing the best within its power, but thinks it should be recruited from men specially trained for their responsible duties. He seems likewise to have looked deeply into the color problem, which is interesting European countries. His acquaintance with intelligent negroes in New York has convinced him that this question is bound to be a menace to the democracy.

*The Vaunt of Men, and Other Poems.* By William Ellery Leonard. New York: B. W. Huebsch. \$1.25 net.

Mr. Leonard has chosen a fitting title. Though taken from the first poem, it applies equally to almost the whole volume, through which run the boast and flourish of youth, a confidence in the insuperable power of the vision seen and held. When an editor failed to appreciate his proffered work

As one reared  
Among the mountains, conscious of mine  
own,  
I bowed and went my ways without a word.  
Possessed of an "involute will and fiery