

the protagonist of a sex. It cries to placid women as well as to complacent men: "Show us the contract plain!"

We, vital women, are no more content  
Bound, first to passion, then to sentiment.  
Of you, the masters, slaves in our poor eyes  
Who most are moved by women's tricks and lies,  
We ask our freedom. In good sooth,  
We only ask to know and speak the truth!

"We only ask to know and speak the truth." A tremendous demand screened by that deprecating "only"! But it is because of such determinations that truth—or an approach to it—will be a little easier for lovers, comrades, women and men. It will not only be the quarry that will have something splendid to contemplate.

LOUIS UNTERMAYER.

## The Revival of Anti-Semitism

*The Revival of Anti-Semitism, by Felix Adler. New York: The American Ethical Union, 2 West 64th Street.*

THIS is an admirably sane and wise address, delivered before the New York Society for Ethical Culture. It patiently untangles the clever current attempts to entwine anti-Jewish and anti-Bolshevist feeling. The Jews, as Dr. Adler says, have the defects of their qualities and the qualities of their defects. But however much one may be inclined to ignore their enormous contribution to western civilization in its intellectual and religious aspects, it is simply nonsense to allow such snobbishness to lead to the "moral backwardness" of which Dr. Adler speaks. That backwardness consists particularly in explaining social trouble and disorder in terms of wicked persons and clans, hidden potentates of sinister and mysterious power. Dr. Adler shows quite easily how tempting these explanations are to people of feeble mentality, but he properly insists that even patriots of a narrow kind have no reason to explain anti-Jewish prejudice on any but obvious historical grounds. It is lamentable that such a pamphlet should be needed in this country. Dr. Adler has written it with a maximum of intelligent candor and it should have therapeutic value if proffered to the right persons.

F. H.

## The Romantic

*The Romantic, by May Sinclair. New York: The Macmillan Company.*

MISS MAY SINCLAIR has taken for her latest novel, *The Romantic*, a curious paradox. It is the problem of the real character of a man who is inspired by the idea of danger, constantly seeking danger, but who in the actual presence of danger is repeatedly overwhelmed by cowardice. Each failure to be heroic he attempts to conceal by lies and subtle attacks upon the characters of those who happen to have witnessed his cowardice. After each failure, too, he is drawn again into those dangers which fire his romantic imagination, and wears always, except in the moment of the trial of his physical courage, the

aspect of real heroism. There is nothing of panic either in his runnings away. They are deliberate, conscious, and overwhelm him even at the time with sickness and remorse.

Allied with this curious attitude toward danger is a similar attitude toward love. Next to his romantic courage, the highest thing in his life, from his own point of view, is his romantic, platonic devotion to a woman to whom he is not married, but who is his companion. Physical passion affects him very much like actual danger. He certainly loathes it; he seems to fear it; and he hates instantly anyone who can arouse passion in him.

The study of John Conway, the hero or the coward as you please, is certainly extraordinary enough to interest those readers who prefer the unusual in literature to the more sympathetic study of types whose charm is their very familiarity. The problem of the real character of John Conway is puzzle enough to hold the attention of the least inquisitive reader until that problem is solved by the novelist through the mouth of McClane, not the soundest of psychologists, to judge from his apparent acceptance of telepathy and from his theory of prophetic dreams.

In addition to the study of character, there is in *The Romantic* a rapid succession of situations developing from it, and episodes interesting for their own sakes; many of them take place in Belgium during the German advance in 1914, and all the principal persons of the story are engaged in that most exciting of all branches of the service, the ambulance. To the development of these scenes, Miss Sinclair brings the best of her powers of rapid and vigorous narration and description. She sees clearly in a way peculiar to herself and has a facility of presenting shapes and colors in images the more striking for being a trifle bizarre in the phrase. It is unfortunate that she has adopted so largely the telegraphic style, clipped, ejaculatory phrases, often incoherent, seldom fully expressive; nouns with modifiers and detached phrases taking the place of sentences. By all the standards of good English, these are the rags and tatters of prose. Verbs, the strongest words in the language, scarcely exist in her vocabulary. To be, to have, and to know are her stock in trade . . . a good philosophy perhaps, but poor diction.

A more fundamental objection might be raised, that a study in abnormal psychology, conducted in the form of a sensational romance, and concluded by an essay of dubious value as psychology, however plausible as romance, is neither literature nor science. This perhaps is an academic question not necessary for anyone to solve who wishes to enjoy the novel or puzzle over the problem.

G. H. C.

### Contributors

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