

mortalized. Mark Twain had a genuine sense of humor but anyone reading Mr. Depew's anecdotes about him would hardly suspect it (for illustration see pp. 291-295).

And so it goes. Four-fifths of his stories are either superfluous or inept. The other fifth are stale and characterless. But they are all good natured and are kindly intentioned. Mr. Depew is a humorist, but his humor is not very discriminating. He likes all men, if they are good conventional fellows, but they all look more or less alike in these pages. Perhaps most of them were a good deal alike, but some of the people he tells us about were really, truly different. These differences, however, are not made to stand out.

B. B. KENDRICK.

## The Great White South

*The Great White South, Being an Account of Experiences With Captain Scott's South Pole Expedition and of the Nature Life of the Antarctic, by Herbert G. Ponting, F. R. G. S. New York: Robert M. McBride and Co. Illustrated. \$7.50.*

THE Great White South, by Herbert G. Ponting, who was the official photographer of Captain Scott's ill-fated expedition of 1910-1913, appeared in England last summer and is now published here. It is a fair sample of the modern British method of writing about Antarctic exploration in that with characteristic British modesty it deals chiefly with trivial incident and commonplace routine and avoids that sense of living upon a more quickened plane of experience which, emanating from the history of such high adventurers, might serve to exalt and gratify the unadventurous reader, even in his arm-chair. Mr. Ponting is content to give a running account, supplemented by very good photographs, of life at the base camp of a great expedition. The story might be of Shackleton's or of Mawson's party except for its retelling of the tragic circumstances of the loss of Scott and his four companions. The author is a very skilful, even if not a very imaginative, photographer. For this reason his book would be a valuable addition to the literature of the Ends of the Earth even without any text at all. Not that the text is bad. Lady Scott indeed remarks in her enthusiastic preface, "What good reading it is!" As writing, however, it is totally without distinction and it does not present very much material which will not be ancient history to the reader who has had his sense of the nobility of human character in the face of suffering and defeat heightened by what has already been published touching upon Captain Scott's heroic end.

Mr. Ponting has none the less succeeded in giving, through the medium of his photographs, a clear impression of the physical appearance of the edge of the Antarctic continent and of the living things which, through the agency of a cold sea teeming with life, visit it to sojourn for a time upon its astonishing barrenness. Mr. Ponting succeeds in this just well enough to make us realize what a wonderful revelation a complete photographic survey of that region, within which there is no resident native life, made by some such genius as Vittorio Sella, might be to a world that esteems life perhaps too highly.

RAYMOND HOLDEN.

## Heavens

*Heavens, by Louis Untermeyer. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. \$1.75.*

THIS book is neatly gotten up and has a futuristic cover design and frontispiece. The contents consist of: first, what purport to be extravaganzas on the nature of heaven in the respective manners of Chesterton, Wells, George Moore, Cabell and Sinclair Lewis, with a prologue and four intermissions; second, five "previews" (a "preview" is carefully defined on the publishers' jacket as "a review of an unwritten book"), the last of which parodies seventeen American poets, ranging from Edwin Arlington Robinson to Robert W. Service.

There is an air of good humor and high spirits in this collection of parodies and literary chit-chat. But if one is not exactly primed to meet Mr. Untermeyer half way, or a bit more than half way, he will find that the cleverness seems obvious, the allusions too thick-set and insistent, and will accumulate weariness as he proceeds. Parody, one fancies, is a dangerous art, requiring to be stunningly well done if it is to be done at all. Mr. Untermeyer is rather the alertly gesticulating and amused cicerone than the irresponsible, sprightly, yet somewhat nonchalant Ariel that he should be. His unflagging, urban up-to-the-minuteness has the flattening effect of an interminable run of electric lights on Broadway, 10 P. M.

It is impossible to avoid the comparison with Max Beerbohm. The Wells, for instance, of *Heavens* is an industriously assembled pastiche of the various items that Mr. Untermeyer had entered in his unwritten concordance to the works of his victim. Mr. Wells is cut up but does not bleed. In *A Christmas Garland* Mr. Beerbohm gives Wells a gay run for his life and manages to get him. His good humor and grace capture the victim just because these qualities are but the last refinement of a lust for blood. While Mr. Beerbohm cannot leave himself out of the game—for it is, after all, his game—Mr. Untermeyer, keen and voluble, does not succeed in getting himself into it.

EDWARD SAPIR.

## Contributors

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