

"My intelligence may adopt a wrong opinion, but when my emotions are stirred I am not mistaken." That deserved fuller development; and were the policy widely adopted there would be less pose in book reviewing. Mr. Sedgwick contends that it is impossible to understand De Musset without understanding George Sand. He has related the incidents of the Sand affair with great dignity and with much gallantry toward the lady. He has told of all the other De Musset amours with equal refinement. He quotes the poet sparingly but with excellent judgment and follows each original with a translation. He praises but little; he looks to the reader to furnish the praise that is denoted by stirred emotions. The book is written in a style that pleases without misleading; it is based on facts that fail to dupe or cozen. There are 343 pages in all, not counting a score of quite exquisite illustrations.

ALLEN W. PORTERFIELD.

Broome Stages
By Clemence Dane
Doubleday, Doran, \$3.00

This is far the most extensive and absorbing novel Miss Dane has written since her *Regiment of Women* (1917) and the popular appeal is distinctly stronger than in that story. Every one likes to read about the stage and behind the scenes into the actors' life. Miss Dane's knowledge of the theatre as a playwright and a student of the drama is extensive, and she uses it effectively. Indeed, this imaginary stage dynasty of actors, managers and dramatists are shown as always with the family intensity and passion, storming, fighting one another, brilliant, tempestuous and reckless, all the way down from Queen Anne's time to the silver screen of our day. A boy called Dick Broome, because he made and sold brooms, fell through the roof of a barn onto the stage of a strolling troupe of players; and thence down to the movies in London and New York, the Broomes are always in the foreground of the theatrical world.

The skill and art with which the transitions are effected are remarkable. Broomes come and go in the story; but always there is forward movement and always there are startling incidents and strange surprises—the suicide of Robert Broome in the theatre after his son William had almost literally driven him off the stage; the elopement of Edmund Broome with Elinor (whom he had known three or four days) half an hour before her wedding was to take place; the mystery of Edmund's parentage—a surprise so artfully managed that the solution startles the reader; the expulsion of an actress from a Broome stage because she was discovered to be the bad

wife of the Broome who wrote the play; and many other sensational happenings. Whatever else the book is, it certainly is not dull. It is one of the few stories whose great length is an asset.

R. D. TOWNSEND.

Their Fathers' God
By O. E. Rølvaag
Harper, \$2.50

In *Giants in the Earth* and *Peder Victorious* Mr. Rølvaag wrote of the struggles and achievements of pioneers in the northwest; and now in *Their Fathers' God*—a novel about the second generation—he continues his powerful drama of the pioneer spirit.

When Peder Holm, a Lutheran Norwegian, marries an Irish Catholic he becomes involved in a peculiarly American problem—the problem of the social readjustment in a new country of people with widely different racial inheritances. With the courageous and enterprising spirit of his forbears Peder faces society, determined to subdue such malignant forces as prejudice and stupidity. When the book closes he is no longer the impulsive and immature young man who blundered into an impossible marriage. He has acquired from experience a greater power to discriminate between illusion and reality.

This novel, like Mr. Rølvaag's earlier ones, displays an extraordinary zest for life, and is rich in those moods and emotions which arouse in us the deepest responses.

ROSALIND LEALE.

The Lady Who Came to Stay
By R. E. Spencer
Alfred A. Knopf, \$2.50

Ghost stories have, more often than not, a sharp clutch upon the imagination. This is probably akin to the groping after the unattainable which fills so large a part in the mind's life. Yet most ghost stories hinge upon a ghoulish climax, a trick to make your blood creep, a histrionic moment left forever unexplained. Here, on the contrary, in this first novel of Mr. Spencer's, you have ghosts who are valid, who are, over and above their tenuous, frail presences, psychologically actual. You can take them for symbols of immortality. You can take them for the implied influences of heredity and environment. Or you can meet them face to face, on their own footing, as the returned spirits of the dead. A lady, Katherine, stricken in mid-career with a mortal ailment and newly widowed, brings Mary, her child, to stay with her husband's sisters. In the silence, the gloom and the bottled routine of this house, there is, at least, security. The four old maids who inhabit it, who, if they do not awaken it, somehow give it an echo of life, these four upright, lonely, unbeautiful creatures accept Katherine and the child with an unbroken front, a



The Lady of Godey's: Sarah Josepha Hale

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reserve beyond which to penetrate proves perilous. The thrust and ebb of these lives, mouldering within dark walls, yet furiously, avidly eking adventure from such meagre scope, beat on your mind with an inexorable reality. Mr. Spencer's writing is almost weirdly sensitive. But the impetus behind it is no thin, delicate apology for vitality. Power lies beneath his half-implied phrases and his partially defined suggestions. *The Lady Who Came To Stay* will linger as surely in your memory as the gray, troubled waters of the ocean continue to beat against the sand.

VIRGILIA PETERSON ROSS.

Behind the Blurbs

Witchcraft, Magic and Alchemy
By Grillo de Givry
Houghton Mifflin, \$10.00

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WALTER R. BROOKS.

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▶▶ AN AMUSING new fortune-telling book is *My Heavens!*, which contains simple instructions for charting the horoscope of your friends, and rules for interpreting them. We discovered that, with the sun in Capricorn at the time of our birth, we "are not naturally gay and carefree, and the atmosphere surrounding us should be as cheerful as possible." We intend to take this up with the Editor, suggesting that he move us to a large sunny office, and perhaps install a radio and an electric refrigerator. Since the sun was in Aquarius at the time of his birth, he "has a natural love of his fellow man, regardless of class or station in life," and we are therefore confident that he will have it done. Our horoscope casts a doubt here, though, for being a child of the goat, we "are apt to be misunderstood." We have noticed that—particularly in our little jokes. However—"we are generally in control of ourself." That, we think, is true. We seldom lose control except when reading Arthur Brisbane or listening to Graham MacNamee.

▶▶ HAVING in the past often suffered from egg-beater's cramp, we hail with cries of joy a new and improved ball-bearing egg-beater which whirls easily and smoothly, and which doesn't stick so hard at the top of the swing that you have to put your foot on it to get it started again.

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