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53

NOVELS.

"The Stickit Minister's Wooing." By S. R. Crockett. London: Hodder and Stoughton. 1900. 6s.

In the preface to "The Stickit Minister's Wooing," Mr. Crockett speaks with gratitude of one at whose instance this second series of "The Stickit Minister" stories has been written. Nothing is more certain than that Mr. Crockett's gratitude will be shared by Mr. Crockett's readers. To the thoughtful he has long figured as one who has erred and gone astray and the declension from "The Lilac Sunbonnet" to "Ione March" has been a chastening spectacle. That the critics have not suffered in silence is proved in the present instance by a pathetic protest from the author that Robert Louis Stevenson at least saw the points of his style. One is always glad of the smallest scrap of added information on the subject of Stevenson even when as in this case it is but a reminiscence from a brother author of "What Louis Stevenson Thought of Me." In delicate and often beautiful language Mr. Crockett conveys the fact that this appreciation of Stevenson's will hearten him up, "when the days of darkness grow too many and too dark." The new stories for all their superiority to Mr. Crockett's recent work reproduce, even exaggerate, the faults which were so patent in "The Stickit Minister." The situations are more than a little strained, and at times suspiciously melodramatic. But for all that, as Stevenson said, "they are *drowned* in Scotland." They are racy with the humours of the soil and tender with the joys and sorrows of common folk. And as the reader listens to the gibes of Gibby the Eel, or the thunders of the Man of Wrath, or more contentedly still to the swish of the scythes among the yellow corn, Mr. Crockett's faults after all seem little things.

"A Prick of Conscience." By Alan St. Aubyn. London: Digby, Long. 1900. 6s.

To take up "Alan St. Aubyn's" latest novel in the hope of finding more of the dark mysteries of academic life revealed is to be disappointed, for, except for a casual reference to the A.D.C. at Oxford, and the statement that newly fledged Bachelors of Arts wear bands, there is nothing to show that the author has made an intimate study of our Universities. The story is better than its predecessors, for it is closer to actual life. But there is little novelty in the treatment of a familiar situation. Many less readable novels are published daily—and really there is very little more to be said.

"A Vizier's Daughter." By Lillias Hamilton. London: Murray. 1900. 6s.

For writing this book Dr. Lillias Hamilton deserves the thanks of that large class of readers who look to the novel for the supply of their historical and geographical information. Miss Hamilton was hampered by many obvious considerations in writing on Afghanistan at all. Nevertheless, she has produced a valuable picture of Afghan life and manners. As a story it is somewhat disappointing, while the every-day English in which the characters converse, is to say the least out of keeping with their surroundings.

"The Brand of the Broad Arrow." By Major Arthur Griffiths. London: Pearson. 1900. 6s.

A story of crime and its punishment written on what may be described as legitimate rather than sensational lines. Major Arthur Griffiths does not attempt to mystify his readers. Herein he follows the practice of the writer in melodrama more closely than the style of the "shocker." The stage is crowded, but on the whole the book is agreeably written and healthy in sentiment. It will hold its own against the bulk of its rivals.

"One of Ourselves." By L. B. Walford. London: Longmans. 1900. 6s.

A tale of those sisters who want to marry the same man. The young women are vulgar in their methods of husband-hunting; their hero is mistaken for a fool and is revealed as a scoundrel. The subject does not entice, and the poor opportunities it offers are lost in the banality of the style and the vivacious inanity of the dialogues and descriptions.

NEW BOOKS AND REPRINTS.

"A Critical Exposition of the Philosophy of Leibniz." By Bertrand Russell. Cambridge: At the University Press. 1900. 7s. 6d.

"Francis Hutcheson." By Wm. Robert Scott. Cambridge: At the University Press. 1900. 8s.

These books appear to be members of a series of works intended to be either expositions of philosophy or biographies of men famous in the history of philosophy. The first above mentioned is a laborious and minute criticism of the philosophy of Leibniz which can appeal only to professed philosophical students and contains little, almost no, biographical matter. Nor is it in the least degree historical; the whole purpose of the work being to examine Leibniz's philosophy as an objective system set out in its logical relations and exposed to severely logical tests. The aim is to give that systematic coherency to the metaphysical conceptions and doctrines of Leibniz the want of which constitutes the student's chief difficulty. Mr. Russell has done this with great care and acuteness. To the reader familiar with the abstract discussions of philosophy Mr. Russell's work is a piece of intellectual gymnastics of the most valuable kind. But though we agree that Mr. Russell's method of criticism does afford opportunities for introducing the examination of the great philosophical problems that form the subject matter of all philosophical systems, it does not follow that it is the most appropriate and useful method of introduction to them: in short we are bound to make it clear that the book can only be valuable to the student who is thoroughly familiar with the subject. Mr. Scott's book is not of such a formidable character. We can imagine any reader who has no more than the ordinary university man's acquaintance with philosophical and ethical questions being greatly interested in it. Mr. Scott shows that Hutcheson's influence on general culture and his place in the history of modern philosophical thought was very considerable not only in Scotland, where he remains still a living and picturesque figure in university tradition, but in England and Germany; though he is not one of the great original thinkers of philosophy. The chapter is specially readable in which Mr. Scott traces the modern utilitarianism through Hutcheson (with his notable phrase of the "greatest happiness of the greatest number") to the Roman philosophic writers. We have read Mr. Scott's book with the greatest satisfaction and appreciation for his restoration of Hutcheson's memory.

"Where Black Rules White." By Hesketh Prichard. London: Constable. 1900. 12s.

Mr. Prichard's description of his journey about and across Hayti has a certain attraction for both ethnical and political students. He saw much in Hayti which is just what would be expected from a priori speculation. Very little indeed is known of the island as it exists to-day, though it has its place in the romantic history of the West Indies. Toussaint L'Ouverture has a place in the memory of all who have given any heed to the relations of France with Hayti 100 years ago. Hayti has put on many of the airs of European government, and its rulers have assumed pompous and meaningless Imperial titles in the intervals of revolutions which have resulted in the establishment of Republics more corrupt and exclusive than most. The Haytian, his mere brutism apart, is a sort of political monkey, and Hayti is a very excellent place to live out of. This black Republic knows how to keep itself aloof from the world. Mr. Prichard speaks of it as "Hayti the mysterious!" Ships and cables touch her shores; but though she pays countries like France and America the compliment of imitating their institutions in name, she will run no risks from settlers. There appears to exist a constant dread that if the white man were to secure possession there would be a return to slavery. The watchword of those in whose hands the so-called Government is concentrated is "Hayti for the Haytians!" which, says Mr. Prichard, being interpreted means "Conservatism to savagery."

"The Little Red Book of Bristol." Edited by Francis B. Bickley. 2 vols. Bristol: Hemmons; London: Sotheran. 1900.

To those who do not know what the "Little Red Book of Bristol" is, the title of these big handsome volumes bound in dark red will seem to be a joke. The "Little Red Book of Bristol" was a volume of early municipal records 11½ in. by 8½ in. It contained 206 leaves, and was bound in boards covered with deerskin stained red. The decision of the Corporation to publish the work, which is invaluable to all inquirers into the municipal, commercial and social history of Bristol, will be welcomed by Bristolians and antiquaries. The work of reproduction has been most admirably done, and the value of the book enhanced by the translation printed in parallel columns with the original French and Latin.

"Wooings and Weddings." By Louise Jordan Miln. London: Pearson. 1900. 16s.

Mrs. Miln's book is a very industrious compilation about an institution in which the average man and woman are interested.