

FICTION IN THE PULPIT.

TO HIM THAT HATH. By Leroy Scott. New York: Doubleday, Page & Co. \$1.50.

"To Him That Hath" is a tract on prison discipline, the reformation of the criminal, the uplifting, physical, mental, and moral of the masses, and the greed of wealth, thinly veneered with "heart interest." It is written with much effort and earnestness; and it is fairly entertaining. The author is not without a sense of humor; his slum boy is an attractive figure, and in the Mayor of Avenue A, a ladies' man, but in mortal terror of being cornered into marrying, we observe the reincarnation of our valued old friend, Mr. Samuel Weller's papa. Mr. Scott shows a genuine and hearty sympathy for the under dog; his pictures of the ex-convict's struggles to begin life anew are touching, and probably faithful. But when all is said, fiction makes a poor appearance in the pulpit; and most books of this sort are neither good stories nor good sermons.

The story turns on the heroic self-sacrifice of a young man, David Aldrich, who, at the death of his best friend, the Rev. Philip Morton, finds out that the latter was hopelessly in the toils of an adventurer, who had blackmailed him out of \$5,000. Morton has led a life of holiness the last few years, redeeming single handed the slum population of St. Christopher's parish; but he has taken the church funds to satisfy the adventures. Aldrich, after various inward struggles, gets the woman out of the way, and to save the parish of St. Christopher's from backsliding, as it would at the unmasking of Morton's character, assumes the theft himself, and goes to the penitentiary for four years. A man might do as much for his friend, but to do it for the good of a parish is a little too steep for the average reader. We share the opinion of the grasping plutocrat, Mr. Chambers, when, on discovering the pious fraud toward the last of the book, he says: "I think you exaggerate the effect of the truth on St. Christopher's."

The plutocrat's daughter is in love with Aldrich; and he with her; and a woman of the streets with him; and another convict with her, but everybody is finally sorted out and coupled with the right person. Aldrich's only rival is a gentleman who in the course of a sentimental conversation "... told her that he had just been appointed chief counsel for the committee for investigating impure foods. She knew how great a distinction this was, how great a token for the future, and she congratulated him warmly." Further on she sighs, "... when I realize the great part you are going to have during the next twenty or thirty years in shaping the conditions under which we live, I wish you could be brought to a broader concept of the human relationship."

Well, of course the man who takes a hand in forcing some manufacturer to labe his deleterious stuff "Raspberry jam, (adulterated)," or "Cucumber pickles, (imitation)," is performing a service to society. He is making no glasses of preserves grow where ever so many grew before; but somehow we are not in sympathy with the desire to bring him to a broader concept of the human relationship.

REAL THING IN THE MURDER MYSTERY LINE.

THE MAULEVERER MURDERS. By A. C. Fox-Davies. New York: John Lane Company, \$1.50.

Mr. Fox-Davies has constructed his story on the principle laid down by the eminent literary light Mr. Archibald Clavering Gunter—that is, something must happen every five hundred words. Beginning with the title, the author furnishes us with a thrill if not in every line, certainly on every page. The plot does not unfold; it rolls up and accumulates like a snowball, and, having opened with five impromptu funerals in the first six chapters, closes with one more, and one in perspective ten or twelve chapters later.

The heroine is introduced thus: "Who's that, Alan? When one is out of England so much, one loses touch with the new beauties." "Well, if you want to know, she's a mystery"—in these few spirited words Mr. Fox-Davies puts the experienced novel reader "on" at once, and it would be a pity to diddle that worthy out of a series of agreeable shocks by revealing too much of the plot.

The heroine leads a double life, and is suspected of leading a triple or quadruple one. Sums like £150,000 are juggled with airily as feathers; the properties include—bicycles, revolvers, knotted cords, strychnine, (wholesale,) perfume-d handkerchiefs, half-destroyed letters, watches stopped at dreadfully significant hours, and the southeast European kingdom of Moritania—royal line extinct. There is a detective who is not likely to displace Sergeant Cuff or Mr. Sherlock Holmes in our affections, and the mystery is so deep by the one hundred and forty-first page that the author himself is compelled to remark:

"Accustomed as he was to startling as-

sertions and unexpected developments, even he could not, at a few moments' notice, readjust his ideas on an entirely new conception of the whole case."

The reader feels much the same way.

A TALE OF THE GOLDEN GATE.

JOHN KENDRY'S IDEA. By Chester Bailey Fernald, author of "The Cat and the Cherub." With frontispiece by G. D. Williams. Pp. 348. New York: The Outing Publishing Company, \$1.50.

Mr. Fernald's new story is staged in and about San Francisco, the opening and the closing scenes taking place on the summits or slopes of Mount Tamalpais, across the bay. But this was mere matter of choice on the author's part, for there is nothing about the tale which makes the city by the Golden Gate its inevitable stage. John Kendry is a rich young San Franciscan, master of his own fortune, educated, traveled, a fine young fellow in ever sense, after the fashion of romantic heroes. His "idea" is the altruistic idea, and he and it are as modern, even as immediate, as cakes hot from the griddle. He wants to use himself and his wealth for the furthering of the good of mankind, wants to make the world better by his own efforts and his money. But also his age and his nation and his father have given him the birthright of the need of action, though the sort of action which results in the turning of his millions into more millions does not appeal to him. He believes himself in love with a very rich and ultra fastidious young woman some years his senior, and is waiting cheerfully for her to give some response to his affection—an attitude which the reader perceives to be either his strenuousness or his love. It proves to be the latter. He is sandbagged on Mt. Tamalpais and wakens to find a beautiful girl with a canteen of brandy watching by his side. And immediately adventures and mysterious happenings come thick and fast. There is a vulgar young villain who is jealously in love with the girl and handy with sandbags and pistols. And there is a delightful and impossible Chinaman with an Arabian Nights flavor, Kendry's friend, huge, rich, mysterious, who speaks French, appears in a new disguise in every chapter, composes poetry as he watches the contortions of a man dying of poison and finally plunges out of the book in an automobile, holding with one hand a man by the ankles and dragging his head on the ground, while he regrets that seventy years of intense life have begun to steal the strength from his thighs. Chan Kow is the most diverting part of the story and if Mr. Fernald will some day write a book entirely about him, never minding in the least whether or not he is possible, he will merit the thanks of novel readers. But when he does he will be wise to eschew the Henry James trimmings in which he indulges in this volume. Psychological analysis and the spinning out, to the last degree of tenuity, of every emotion that crosses the heart of a character somehow do not seem to harmonize in a book with Chan Kow, even when he is merely a subordinate character. Mr. Fernald does that sort of thing very well, however, and succeeds by virtue of it in giving to Kendry's character a touch of intellectual interest which would otherwise be lacking.

ENERGY AND PLUCK.

EMPIRE BUILDERS. By Francis Lynde. One volume. Pp. 377. With illustrations by Jay Hambridge. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company.

Mr. Francis Lynde's "Empire Builders" is one of those excessively up-to-date stories that make their appeal to this day and generation not so much from any special literary value as because they breathe the spirit of indomitable effort and accomplishment that is transforming this earth and somehow making heroes out of just ordinary men earning their daily bread. The fashion in heroes has changed, and there is none more popular just now than the hard-working, plucky, keen-witted, successful young captains of industry who figure in the stirring tales of which this is an unusually good sample. Things happen from the first page to the last, with numerous occasions of quite breathless suspense as to there being any survivors to go on to the end, and every character is as thoroughly alive and comprehensible as if the Plug Mountain branch railroad in its making had been a part of our own experience.

The story follows the efforts of some ambitious young engineers to carry through to completion a certain difficult section of railroad that promised vast expense without absolutely certain and quick returns, and was, therefore, most unpopular with "the men higher up," whose ambitions centred largely in their pockets and very slightly in prospective benefits to any region or people. How the honestly determined young men outgeneraled and outfought the unscrupulous old grafters and finally brought some of the more decent among their enemies over to their own way of thinking makes capital reading, even if it may seem wildly exaggerated at points. Events of recent occurrence render it unnecessary to seek

far for the source of Mr. Lynde's inspiration and make it not a difficult matter to credit the possibility of even his most extraordinary incidents. Plenty of just such grit and nerve and persistence as went to the making of Stuart Ford and his comrades are graduated every Summer from colleges all over the land, and they are just as effective in real life as they are in Mr. Lynde's imagination.

"UNDER THE POMPADOUR."

UNDER THE POMPADOUR. A Romance. By E. W. Jennings. One volume. Pp. 328. New York: Brentano's, \$1.50.

Mr. Edward W. Jennings's story is no worse, certainly, and perhaps a little better, than the average of its numerous predecessors in the same class—the novels that depend for their background and main events upon some interesting bit of ancient history that is filled out and rendered into familiar terms in a manner to accord with the author's degree of imaginative power. This time it is the wicked and frivolous Court of Louis XV, in the day of La Marquise de Pompadour that furnishes the scene and gives Mr. Jennings a rather free hand in the matter of reckless characters and dark schemes. A young Englishman of generous and unsuspecting nature, who flees to France to escape from some family skeletons, there falls into far worse troubles through his infatuation with two ladies of the Court—the one as good as she is beautiful and the other combining beauty and wickedness in the same proportions. When the wicked lady has sufficiently befooled and betrayed him for her own pleasure and profit, the supremely loyal and long-suffering damsel whom he really adores agrees to forgive and forget all past delinquencies. La Pompadour herself plays but a slight part in the tale, which is interesting enough as an echo of a day that still keeps its hold upon the imagination.

FUNNY DETECTIVE STORY.

2835 MAYFAIR. A Novel. By Frank Richardson. One volume. Pp. 310. New York: Mitchell Kennerley, \$1.50.

It is not the easiest thing in the world to state the precise class in fiction to which Mr. Frank Richardson's "2835 Mayfair" should be relegated, though it might very likely be classed with "detective stories" in any public library which had so far forgotten library traditions as to harbor such a piece of audacity at all. A deep and dark mystery it certainly contains, and the solution of this mystery occupies the strained attention of very nearly every character in the book from the startling first page until the amazing last one. Yet this detective tale is written by a man who fancies himself a humorist.

DULL ITALIAN ROMANCE.

TEMPTATION. By Richard Bagot. Pp. 374. New York: The Macmillan Company, \$1.50.

"Temptation" is another of Mr. Richard Bagot's painstaking efforts to put the breath of life and reality into a depiction of Italian persons of the same character as those about whom Mr. Marion Crawford is wont to weave his romances. Mr. Bagot's story is an imitation of what the writer of "Saracinesca" can do with the simplicities and subtleties of the Italian character. The familiar names are all there; the beautiful old palaces and gardens, the lovely dark women, stately and cold or excitable and passionate; the handsome, sinister men; the plots and the mysteries that can be so fascinating, but the sad truth is that there are few gleams of fascination in "Temptation."

"SHAKESPEARE'S CHURCH."

SHAKESPEARE'S CHURCH. By J. Harvet Bloom, M. A., author of "The Heraldry of the Churches of the West Riding of Yorkshire," "A History of Preston-on-Stour," "The Cartae Antiquae of Lord Willoughby de Broke," and editor of the "Victoria History for the County of Warwick." London: T. Fisher Unwin.

Mr. Bloom's book betrays his close and affectionate study of the fabric about which he writes. The Collegiate Church of the Holy Trinity of Stratford-on-Avon is indeed worthy of exhaustive scrutiny, dating back to the thirteenth century, and typical in many of its masses and details of some of the best ideas of English parochial architecture. Mr. Bloom considers but briefly the history and general features of the building, devoting most of his book to an elaborate record of the inscriptions, monuments, furniture, and ornaments.

"THE KINGMAKERS."

THE KINGMAKERS. By Armer Barclay. Author of "The Worsleys," "A Shadowy Partner," &c. Boston: Small, Maynard & Co. \$1.50.

Here is a novel which takes a very pleasing place in that order of fiction which deals with political affairs in imaginary kingdoms of Central Europe. There is plenty of conspiracy, plenty of acrobatic and villainy—such romance as

two love affairs can contrive, and, best of all, some really good fighting. The author of "The Kingmakers" has really written a battle which is worth while.

CANADA AND THE COLONIES.

OUR STRUGGLE FOR THE FOURTEENTH COLONY. Canada and the American Revolution. By Justin H. Smith. 2 vols. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, \$6.

In both the wars fought between Great Britain and America Canada has been our natural military objective, and in each of them we labored to wear our northern neighbor from her allegiance. Canada seemed to our statesmen and warriors the most vulnerable spot in England's armor, and, though never successful, we made heroic efforts to win the northern province during the Revolution and later in the war of 1812.

The attempt made by the revolting colonies to swing Canada into line with them has now received exhaustive treatment at the hands of Prof. Justin H. Smith of Dartmouth. The two substantial, not to say bulky, volumes just published by Messrs. Putnam furnish what is likely long to remain the authoritative history of our attempt to secure the adhesion of "the Fourteenth Colony," as Prof. Smith rather dramatically styles Canada. The work is based mainly on a large number of manuscript authorities, though printed matter and secondary works appear to have been faithfully consulted. It will appeal primarily to the specialist in American history, for few general readers of history would care to digest some twelve hundred pages to gain even a thorough understanding of a failure.

This is not to say that the failures of history should be ignored. The past teaches us by its failures as well as by its successes. Prof. Smith has not only conducted a faithful piece of research; he has written an interesting book, though we feel it could be compressed to advantage.

Even before the battle of Lexington some of New England's more far-sighted statesmen had turned their eyes north and realized the importance of Canada or the Province of Quebec, as it was called, for the American cause. The Quebec Act of 1774, extending the boundaries of the province southwest to the Ohio angered the colonies, and Canada herself was not tranquil. The chief of her grievances was that no assembly had been called, though it had been promised. The dissatisfaction of the Canadians stimulated the colonists' desire for the province, and the resulting struggle forms a not unimportant chapter in the history of the Revolution. It is impossible in the space at our disposal to summarize Prof. Smith's work. It should be examined by all students who want a real understanding of our struggle for Canada.

"THE MAYOR'S WIFE."

THE MAYOR'S WIFE. By Anna Katharine Green, author of "The Woman in the Alcove," "The Millionaire Baby," and "The Filigree Ball." Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company.

Whoever likes the sort of mystery which Anna Katharine Green so ingeniously contrives and resolves would be delighted by this story. It has a great deal more plot than most books by this author, and possesses some psychological interest. The cipher which the Mayor's wife employs in communicating with her husband is one of the cleverest that has ever found its way into fiction.

A SOMBRE TALE.

RUNNING HORSE INN. By Alfred Tredder Sheppard. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company.

This is an elaborate picture of country life in southeast England a century ago. It is quite possible that the author had in mind "The Trumpet Major" when he sketched his scenes. The plot is too weak to support itself through 400 pages, although the best part of it is near the close. The story is a dark one—that of the degradation of a man who nevertheless contrives to summon up some lingering nobility and give himself to a martyr's death.

A REVOLUTIONARY STORY.

HESTER OF THE GRANTS. By Theodora Peck. New York: Duffield & Co. \$2.50.

"Hester" is the work of a young woman of nineteen. It was published first two years ago, and has ever since been winning an increasing audience. There are many evidences of youth in the composition of the narrative, but on the whole it is a surprising piece of work for a young author, and furnishes very pleasing and satisfactory reading to all interested in the events and spirit of our country's most romantic days.

In the latter part of this month B. W. Dodge & Co. will publish a humorous novel, by Frances Crouch, entitled "Femaline Finance." The story is laid in New York and has to do with a farmer who is pursued by two female bill collectors.