

him, indeed eager to go abroad to meet him. The book deals with a period of peace, but it shows in every page that England was essentially a fighting England; and those who will cavil at the prize-fighting portion of the book—and we have to confess ourselves among the number—must recognize the author's purpose. Britain's strength on the field of battle is, in his estimation, largely due to her manly pastimes at home; and the exponents of the noble art of self-defence and the patrons of the ring are of a piece with the heroes who fight her battles and the enthusiasts who applaud their deeds. The majority of cultivated readers will, doubtless, be of the opinion that Dr. Doyle has overdone this part of his theme, while the great mass of readers will follow with breathless interest the thirty odd rounds in the pelting rain between Champion Harrison and Crab Wilson.

But the author must not ask too many of us to see the spiritual side of the struggle. It is impossible to agree with him when he says: "Such a spectacle may brutalize those who are brutal, but I say that there is a spiritual side to it also, and that the sight of the utmost human limit of endurance and courage is one which bears a lesson of its own." It is only the brute in us that can delight in such contests; and the man who could see the spiritual side of a fight to a finish without gloves could convince himself of the ethics of a cock-fight or the spiritual meaning in the death grip of a pair of well-matched bull-dogs. That the author should plead with the reader to see the spiritual in this brutal scene is proof that there is doubt in his own mind as to its reality. When, at school, we read that wonderful glove contest in the fifth book of the *Æneid*, and gloated over the lines:—

"At non tardatus casu neque territus heros
Acrior ad pugnam reddit, ac vim suscitât ira,"

it was the little savage in our hearts that was uppermost, and not the hero. A fight for a purse can never be made noble, but since Virgil gave it epic treatment no writer has come so near exalting such a scene to regions of art as has Conan Doyle. He, doubtless, saw how impossible such a theme would be for artistic treatment, and elevates it by excluding the proper contestant at the last moment and bringing in Champion Harrison—an old Entellus—as a substitute.

It is impossible to admire this degradation of humanity, and although the exhibition of endurance is skilfully done, we are glad to get rid of the disgusting details. Far nobler, and told in a nobler manner, is that magnificent struggle between the four-in-hand of Sir John Lade and the tandem driven by Buck Tregellis.

Despite the defects, and they are serious, the book

is a great one, and we are gratified to read in the closing paragraph that: "The day may come when I shall write down all that I remember of the greatest battle ever fought on salt water." Sequels are not often welcome, but a book by Dr. Doyle dealing with great heroes in great action cannot fail to be interesting. We prophesy a second "Micah Clarke," and to appreciate it to the full it will be necessary to know "Rodney Stone."

T.G.M.

CONTRIBUTIONS.

THE UNIVERSITY MAN IN NEWSPAPER WORK.

HALF a dozen years ago when, a young graduate, I was about to adventure myself upon an outside world, which seemed to me very big and anything but friendly, I confided to one of our professors the fact that I had some idea of trying journalism—newspaper work I have since learned to call it. The professor remarked that journalism is a vocation of such a nature that he who enters it should have his points of view attained and, to some extent, fixed before he enters it; for the hurry of the work is such that it is difficult after embarking on it to find time for the study and reflection necessary to the adoption of general points of view from which the facts of life can be approached. That remains the soundest remark upon the subject which I have heard, and it may be taken as the justification of the existence of the university-bred man in newspaper work; for I take it that to an audience of university men the most interesting phase of newspaper work is the extent to which graduates can find places in it. Some graduates do find places in it, and I may be permitted to give some of the results of my own experience, first premising that that experience consists of but four or five years of work upon three papers, all in one town. For other than Canadian papers, or for papers in other places than Toronto, I have no desire to speak.

At the outset let me comment upon a very widespread idea concerning newspaper work, an idea which may be seen to be implied in a remark already made: that life on a newspaper is made up of a perpetual hurry and bustle, and filled with startling contrasts and romantic experiences. The ordinary man who has paid to get into an entertainment, when he sees a newspaper man walk in without paying, is apt to think that the man who enjoys such a privilege is fortunate, and does not always recollect that the newspaper man pays for his admission by the notice he writes, and that constant attendance at such affairs robs them as a rule of all interest, and makes attendance on them a mere mat-