

## BOOK NOTICES, REVIEWS, ETC.

It was hardly to be expected that the successor of Professor Swing, the late noted heterodox divine of Chicago, would prove a commonplace individual, yet he might have been much less gifted than this, his first published book, shows.

'A Man's Value to Society' at once sets the seal of literary ability upon the Rev. Newell Dwight Hillis, and gives him rank among successful authors.

The book is dedicated briefly 'To My Wife, in recognition of her helpfulness, loyalty and devotion,' and this is sufficient excuse—if one were needed—for discussing it at some length in the pages of a home and woman's paper.

The sub-title gives an index of the character and purpose of the book: 'Studies in Self-Culture and Character,' and we venture to assert that never were such studies written with greater vigor and lucidity. Each chapter, philosophical and ethical as it is in character, is never for a moment dull or heavy, but brightened by wealth of illustration, and enriched by rhetorical beauty. What Ian Maclaren has done in 'The Mind of the Master' to lead us into higher conceptions of Divinity, Newell Dwight Hillis has accomplished, perhaps with greater solidity, in dealing with the moral and spiritual nature of men.

To quote with any success from such a book is impossible, since in every page the philosophy is wise enough, the illustration rich enough, to have individual setting; nor is it easy to make choice of chapters since all are good.

'The Elements of Worth in the Individual,' 'Character,' 'Aspirations and Ideals,' 'Physical Basis of Character,' 'The Imagination,' 'Enthusiasm of Friendship,' 'The Science of Living with Men,'—these are a few of the chapter titles which may give some idea of the trend and motive of the book, but none of the entertaining and wise manner of their treatment.

It is a book to be placed in the hands of all thoughtful readers, especially perhaps into the hands of men—and yet more especially those of young men, who, starting out in life, meet at every corner temptations, difficulties and disillusion, which need a store of wisdom and spiritual strength to combat.

There is nothing of weak cant about the book, nor even dreaminess. It is robust in the practical strength that is a strong man's delight, yet it blends in wonderful way the grand truths of a large Christianity with the wisdom of the centuries, and clothes the happy result in choice and attractive phrasing.

It is a book for mothers to buy for

'Mollie Melville,' by E. Everett Green, \$1.25, T. Nelson & Sons, London, Copp, Clark & Co., Toronto.

'A Man's Value to Society,' by Newell Dwight Hillis, \$1.25, Fleming H. Revell Co., Toronto.

their sons, and sisters for brothers; one to be read by husband and wife together in the quiet and thoughtful moments when they desire to measure life truly.

Again, it is a book for that quiet hour—yours or mine—when withdrawn from the world and its low standards, we would build up and strengthen our ideals.

Here are a few of the many quotable bits:

'Strangely enough some are unwilling to have ascended progressively from an animal, but quite willing to have come up directly from the clod.' . . .

'Scholars perceive that matter has fulfilled its mission, now that dust stands erect, throbbing in a thinking brain and beating in a glowing heart.' . . .

'Success means that the heart sings while the hand works.' . . .

'He who has one strong faculty, the using of which would give delight and success, and who passes it by to use a weaker faculty, is doomed to mediocrity and heart breaking failure.' . . .

'As there is sediment in the bottom of a glass of impure water, so there is mud in the bottom of a bad man's life.' . . .

Quite a pretty and bright story for girls is Mollie Melville by E. Everett Green. The characters are all attractive, while Mollie and her cousin Barbara are charming young girls, amid pure and refined surroundings. There are several pretty love affairs wrought in together with sufficient adventure to keep it interesting. The tale runs easily, and is as free from any of the grief and sordid aspects of life as the thoughts and fancies of a young girl should be. The book is well bound and illustrated, making an altogether charming gift book for a young daughter or girl friend of fair sixteen.

A valuable little brochure has been written by H. Spencer Howell of Galt, Ont., entitled 'The Union Jack'—a short history of our national flag, for the children of our public schools. In a brief four pages it gives the origin and history of the British ensign, with description of the various naval flags; and also details the designs of ten Canadian flags—the Canadian ensign, those of the Governor General and Lieutenant Governors.

The author is generously sending copies of the brochure to every public school in the province; and it should be among the reference volumes in every library.

### A SINGING MOUSE.

BY W. T. D.

Several years ago the writer heard a strange noise near some water pipes in a storeroom, and at first thought that one of them had broken and that a little stream was gurgling between the walls. Later this gurgling sound was discovered to be produced by a mouse, which after a few days was captured in one of the ordinary traps made to secure these little

rodents alive. When the mouse was removed from the trap she was permitted to run about a small room, and it was noticed that the harder she ran the more she sang. On other occasions the mouse was let out in the same room, and she could always be made to sing simply by causing her to run rapidly and become more or less excited. When eating or gnawing her wooden cage the singing was also particularly loud, and was evidently produced by exertion of any kind.

Eleven days after her capture this tuneful mouse gave birth to two young, and it was noticed that it was just previous to, and for some time after their birth, that the mouse sang most continuously. By the middle of December the young gave their mother considerable anxiety. They were the size of respectable peanuts, and old enough to get out of the nest and go sprawling about the cage, and their mother was obliged to pick them up and carry them into the nest again. This exertion caused her to keep up a constant singing, and she no doubt lost her temper, too, for on December 21st she ate about one-half of one of her offspring, commencing at its head. The one devoured was the more backward of the two, and the lively youngster ensconced himself at the other end of the cage, furthest away from his kind mother.

These two mice, mother and son, were not very good specimens of their kind. An abundant food supply in time bettered their condition, but they were at first of poor appearance—bags of bones. The singing mouse gave birth in time to fourteen more young, divided into four litters, but the details mentioned in connection with the first family, were repeated with slight variations. It was discovered one morning that this musical rodent had devoured her spouse, and having broken up the family, she was removed to a bottle of alcohol, where she remains.

It is evident that it was not happy feelings that made this mouse sing. She was evidently diseased, and violent exertion caused her to make the pleasant gurgling sound which has been called singing. When she was weakest and anxious over her babies she also sang a great deal, and often when she was poked out of her cotton nest she would cower at the opposite end of the cage and the involuntary song would commence.

Reference to the writings of various naturalists who have had singing mice also shows their captives sang while exerting themselves, while running about the cage, turning the wheel, or eating.

The writer of this has also had a second singing mouse that exhibited all the characteristics mentioned in the above instances, and there can be no reasonable doubt that it is rather an asthmatic affection and not happy choice that causes these little rodents to raise their voices in song.

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