

A New Book by Gilbert Parker.

HIS LOVERS of literature and as Canadians especially, we hail with delight a new book from the pen of our Canadian novelist. Gilbert Parker. Unlike the work by which he is best known "The Seats of the Mighty," "The Battle of the Strong," as the author himself tells us, is not an historical novel, although its principal action is at the time of the French Revolution and the subsequent war with the English. The scene is on Jersey Island, and Gilbert Parker takes his readers along the rocky, dangerous coast, points out the treacherous whirlpools, the hidden rocks, and steep cliffs, leads him through the streets of the old Norman town of St. Heliers, into the Vier Marche, even into the neat cottages of the good wives of Jersey, and the reader feels that he has seen it all. The author, by a skilful division of his novel into five books, with a specified period of time between each, passes over the years so gracefully, that the heroine we meet in the first chapter as a demure, roguish maiden of five, the descendant of an exiled French family, quite naturally takes her farewell of us as the proud mother of a youth of twenty-one. The graceful, brave young midshipman, Philip D'Avranche, who greets us at the same time, must share his claim as hero, with the noble hearted, self-denying, ship-builder's apprentice, Ranulph Delagarde, a traitor's son, whom we first know in the second chapter. Perhaps a third has a right to urge a small claim, Detricand, a worthless dissolute, one of the many sent by France to wrest Jersey from the British, but who afterwards commands our heartiest approbation and respect, by his strong will, bravery and unselfishness, all inspired by his love for the heroine, Guida Landresse de Landresse.

Guida, in many respects, is a model woman, yet not too model to be life-

like. Her own honest nature and upright character lead her to place unbounded faith in everybody, so she listens believing, to the ardent love-phrases Philip D'Avranche whispers in her ear, and she allows him to persuade her to a secret marriage on the eve of his departure for a two months' cruise. But the war breaks out and Philip returns not, to make public the marriage. His letters come occasionally, still filled with protestations of his love for her, but meanwhile Guida learns from other sources, that Philip has unexpectedly been made heir of one of the sovereign dukedoms of France, and that he was lending his consent to negotiations for his marriage with a countess, as befitting his present rank. Enraged at his falseness, she writes but once more to him, telling him she would never make public the marriage and leaving him free to carry out his designs in France.

It is a crucial ordeal for a woman, when she forces herself to see the naked truth concerning the man she has loved, yet the man who has wronged her. She is born anew in that moment. It may be to love on, to blind herself, and condone and defend, so lowering her own moral tone; or to congeal in heart, become keener in intellect, scornful and bitter with her own sex and merciless towards the other; intolerant, judging all the world by her own experience, incredulous of any true thing; or again she may become stronger, sadder, wiser; deceiving herself in nothing, yet never forgiving at least one thing—the destruction of an innocent faith and a noble credulity; seeing clearly the whole wrong; but out of a largeness of nature and by virtue of a high sense of duty, devoting her days to the salvation of a man's honor, to the betterment of one weak or wicked nature. Of these last would have been Guida." With her young child she retires from St. Heliers and lives with him on a lonely part of the rocky coast. Here after years of absence,