

BOOKS OF THE HOUR

A GENTLEMAN OF THE SOUTH. By William Garrott Brown. Toronto: George N. Morang & Co. Price, \$1.25.

Apart from the fact that the plot interest of this book is quite good, which in itself should form a test of quality, there is a haunting charm about the treatment of it which renders the tale memorable. The characters are sketched off with a sympathetic touch, and even the wretched cause of the tragedy that fills the closing scenes of the story, Robert Underwood, has his course in some measure vindicated. The real gentleman of the south, Henry Selden, cannot fail to please. His character, in the face of the awful trials he has to meet, is inspiring and truthful. The love interest glimmers through the book, to shine forth gloriously at the conclusion. It is, on the whole, a novel of no little power, and should repay reading.

A DETACHED PIRATE. By Helen Millicote. Montreal: The Montreal News Company Limited.

There are spots in this book when the reader holds his breath, not because the characters are having a hazardous time of it, for they don't, but because the talented authoress herself is trifling on the thin edge of propriety. When all is



Helen Millicote,

Author of "A Detached Pirate."

snid and done, however, there is nothing so extremely objectionable about the book. Miss Millicote has chosen a somewhat daring theme, it is true, but she has handled it with rare skill, and in the end has overthrown all hostile criticism. She has cheated her readers out of a rich scandal in a decidedly clever manner. A divorced woman is not the most pleasing type of a heroine, and when she is of the kind that all men adore, the situation is rendered so much the more hazard-

ous. Just such a personage has Miss Millicote selected and thrown into the midst of Halifax military society to work havoc among the officers of the garrison. A portraiture such as that of Gay Vandaleur from a woman's pen should be welcomed. Men occasionally try their hand at depicting women of her stamp, and one wonders whether their characterizations are accurate. In the case of Gay Vandaleur there is less uncertainty.

ALL ON THE IRISH SHORE. By E. Somerville and Martin Ross. Toronto: Copp, Clark Co.

There are eleven sketches of Irish life in this book, dealing principally with hunting and sporting life. While there is but little attempt at plot and but little more at characterization, the sketches, as straightforward relations of incidents, are possessed of considerable humor and exhibit artistic treatment. The three beginning with "Fanny Fitz's Gaiter," which

are connected by a common interest, are the best pieces of work in the book, so far as incident goes. They illustrate very well the characteristics of the rest of the sketches. Some of the other chapters in the book are much less interesting, being somewhat beclouded and purposeless.

THE SACRIFICE OF THE SHANNON. By W. Albert Hickman. Toronto: William Briggs.

From cover to cover, this book is a genuinely good piece of work. It is a Canadian story with a Canadian hero and heroine and with its scene laid in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. The relief of a steamer, imprisoned in the ice off Cape Gaspe, by the ice-breaker Shannon, and the subsequent loss of the latter forms the main theme of the tale and gives the preponderating interest to it, though a subsidiary love story adds considerable charm as well to its pages. The book relies for its strength on the descriptive ability of the author. He shows a minute acquaintance with the Gulf and its navigation, and he has the faculty of portraying scenes and incidents with color and freshness, his description of the yacht race in the second chapter being admirable. A little immaturity is displayed, however, when he goes on to trace the development of character. The reader would like to have seen the change in the heroine's feelings towards Wilson worked out a little more in detail. Both characters were sufficiently well depicted to immediately interest the reader, and had the course of their love been a little more intimately treated, the result would have been better. The love interest ostensibly formed the motif of the plot and should consequently have received more attention. A word of praise should be bestowed on Mr. Hickman's portraiture of Donald, who is an even more striking individual than the paragon, Wilson, himself.

CASTLE OMERAGH. By F. Frankfort Moore. Toronto: Copp, Clark Co.

The author of the old favorite story of "The Jessamy Bride," has taken the Ireland of Cromwell as the scene of his latest novel. Over in the west, out of the main tide of the English invasion, lay Castle Omeragh, in which a determined stand was made against a detached party of Roundheads. Around this main incident of the plot has been woven an absorbing tale of adventure and love, with a little of the mystical thrown in here and there and with some attention to Irish characterization as well. Indeed, Mr. Moore's novel is instructive as well as entertaining, for he throws a new light on the Cromwellian invasion of Ireland. His estimate, both of the aims and objects of the invader, and of the character of the native Irish, lends value to the book. The mastery of the romancer's art, which Mr. Moore has acquired, renders the stirring incidents of the story life-like, and some scenes, notably the attack on the castle, are deserving of high praise.

THE HEBREW. By John A. Stewart. Toronto: William Briggs.

This book, under the title of "The Samaritans," received attention in this column last month. The present volume is a choice piece of book-making, admirably printed and light in weight. A second glance through its pages, serves to impress us still further with Mr. Stewart's singular ability to impress