

Book Reviews

By HOWARD S. ROSS.

A SHORT HISTORY OF ENGLAND, by Gilbert K. Chesterton, is published by McClelland, Goodchild & Stewart, of Toronto, at \$1.50 net.

Mr. Chesterton's admirers will remember the vivid little book which he wrote several years ago, "The Victorian Age in Literature." What that book did for a period of English thought, the present work achieves for the history of England as a whole. The author has a genius for generalization which is surpassed by none of his contemporaries, and the theory he here advances, of the English reformation, and of its relation to our present distresses, will be found stimulating and provocative. It is a book which raises many problems. But more than that, it offers some solutions.

COMMONWEALTH OR EMPIRE? By V. H. Ruthenford (London: Headley Bros., 1s. 3d.)

The author who represented Brentford in the great Liberal Parliament of 1906 gives in this vigorous brochure his belief as to the causes of the war. He sees them in the common imperialism of all countries. In the chapter "The Remedy for Empire," he advocates not only self-government for the British or white communities, but self-government for all races, Irish, Egyptian, and Indian. He insists that this is the logical and necessary consequence of the adoption of democratic principles. He joins in what seems to be a growing desire for a new and bolder policy for British democracy, based on Internationalism, freedom of person and opinion, and a measure of constructive Socialism.

THE PUBLIC DEFENDER, by Mayer C. Goldman, of the New York Bar with a foreword by Justice Wesley O. Howard, of the Appellate Division, New York Supreme Court. The publishers are G. P. Putnam's Sons, 2 West 45th street, New York and London. The price is \$1.00.

It is being generally recognized that a poor man under indictment is permitted to go through the forms and appearances of a trial but such trial is often very unfair.

Provision for a Public Defender should be made. As Judge Howard writes, "No law could be more economical none more humane."

This book shows in a concrete fashion how one of the needs under criminal law can be filled. It means a square deal and a fair hearing for every person accused of crime. Lawyer and layman have an interest in the cause for which Mr. Goldman pleads so effectively.

A HAZARD OF NEW FORTUNES, by Wm. Dean Howells is another of The Modern Library issued in Canada by The Musson Book Co., Limited, of Toronto. The price is seventy-five cents. The publishers in the United States are Boni and Liveright, Inc., of New York.

The brilliant introduction is by Alexander Harvey. By many, Howells is considered a literary artist of the first rank. He deals with realism rather than romanticism. His career shows the possibilities for a self-taught man.

Like many famous writers he spent some years (in his father's establishment) as typesetter and proof-reader and then as reporter in the legislature for a newspaper in Columbus.

He was an accomplished linguist and intimately familiar with the literature of Continental Europe. He reviewed, noted, sketched, read and edited long before he won his way as a novelist and before he considered himself equipped for the part so it is not strange that there is a striking contrast between a Howells story and a novel by an inexperienced writer.

Howells made known world-wide the "culture" of Boston, and created the Boston young woman famous for her doubts, her philosophy and her scruples.

"A Hazard of New Fortunes" is probably the most important of the novels of Howells. He sees the social changes coming and tells America that there are many problems of democracy yet to be solved. It is a work of art as well as a wonderful story.

This is one of The Modern Library of the world's best books. They are well printed and bound in limp cloth leather and it is not surprising that it was suggested by other publishers that the price should be increased. Fortunately for lovers of good books the publishers prefer a low price and a wide circulation.

THE STORY-BOOK OF SCIENCE is by Jean Henri Fabre. The publishers are McClelland, Goodchild & Stewart, of Toronto. The price is \$2.00 net.

The book is well illustrated and deals with popular science about the metals under the earth, the plants, and animals, and the planets, told in story form by the most gifted nature writer the world has known in a hundred years. It is a book especially for young people of from 10 to 16 years, and it a fascinating and accurate account for grown ups with hearts still young enough to be interested in the great world around them.

Maeterlinck has called Fabre "the insects' Homer." In France his books have gone into many editions and in recent years the world that reads has in a number of ways tried to do honor to this eminent scientist who studied the nature world with the zeal of a mediaeval monk and whose scholarship and good humor always made itself felt in his writing and who expressed himself with the simplicity and the fire of a poet.

THE SCHOOL AS A SOCIAL INSTITUTION; an introduction to the study of social education by Charles L. Robbins, Ph.D., Teacher of History of Education in The New York Training School for Teachers, is published (\$2.00) by Allyn & Bacon of New York, Boston and Chicago.

The author presents this really valuable contribution not as a new discovery in education, but rather as an attempt to describe in his own way the most vital present-day conceptions of what the school has been, is and is becoming and makes available in attractive form for teachers, social workers, and citizens interested in social problems such a survey of the school as will present in a brief yet moderately comprehensive manner the social significance of its educational work, its relation to other institutions and forces, its function as a determining and controlling force, its work as a protective agency, and its service as a community centre.

The author has in this book of four hundred and seventy pages made a valuable addition to the literature dealing with education and the book will doubtless be widely used as a reference work.

POOR PEOPLE by FEDOR DOSTOYEVSKY, is one of the MODERN LIBRARY OF THE WORLD'S BEST BOOKS. The books are issued in Canada by The Musson Book Co., Limited, publishers, Cor. East Dundas and Victoria Streets, Toronto. The books are particularly good value at seventy-five cents. The U. S. A. publishers are Boni & Liveright, Inc., New York City.

This was the author's first novel and was completed when he was twenty-four. "If I do not find a publisher for it," he wrote to his older brother, "I shall probably hang myself."

The novel appeared in 1846 and was received with wild enthusiasm, as was almost every later work.

He was born in Moscow in 1821 in a charity hospital where his father was a physician. The parents and eight children occupied but two rooms. His predilection for pathologic characters was no doubt due to the early impressions received in the hospital. He became a sub-lieutenant and was immediately given a post in the engineering corps of Petrograd. He was improvident and impractical in money matters, so that with an income of 5,000 rubles from his salary and his father's estate he was almost always in a state of want even after he had begun to receive enormous revenues from the sale of his books. He became the leader of the slavophilism which taught it was the mission of the Russians to regenerate the world and that the institutions of the Russian people bore in them the germs of a Socialistic society, so that no real revolution was necessary for its realization in Russia. He spent much time in prison. In 1861-62 he founded The Times which proved very successful. His *Memoirs From A Dead House* written in Siberia describes his experiences in prison and is his most important work. "It is the best and most original work in all modern literature," declared Tolstoy. He was a child of the city and his subjects are drawn mostly from the slums and the underworld. The poor, the down-trodden, the disinherited, the degraded, the drunkard, the women of the street, the lunatic, the psychopath, fill his books. He is consumed with pity for all unfortunates and fills the heart of the reader with the same pity.

THE WESTERN CONVEYANCER, published by Burroughs and Company, Limited, of Calgary, was compiled by Geo. D. Macvicar, B.A., of Winnipeg, Barrister-at-Law, assisted by a distinguished group of lawyers specializing in conveyancing practice. There is a comprehensive index by Walter S. Scott, LL.D.

The book contains a complete collection of all forms and conveyancing precedents in use in Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba and Saskatchewan, and was undertaken in response to a demand for a set of precedents drafted with special reference to the requirements of Western lawyers. Completeness and lucidity of arrangement have been attained. Forms and clauses applicable to all combinations of circumstances are found in this valuable collection.

AN UNSOCIAL SOCIALIST, By George Bernard Shaw, is issued by The Musson Book Co., Limited, publishers, Cor. East Dundas and Victoria Sts., Toronto. The original publishers are Boni & Liveright, Inc., New York City. The price is seventy-five cents.

This is one of the splendid series THE MODERN LIBRARY OF THE WORLD'S BEST BOOKS. About forty books containing what many consider the best in literature have now been issued and new titles are added frequently. The books are bound by hand in limp cloth leather and well printed.

There is no introduction. It would be difficult to find anyone bold enough to venture to introduce the iconoclastic Shaw. It will be recalled that Shaw wrote some years ago an article, "Mr. Bernard Shaw's Works of Fiction, Reviewed by Himself."

THE SECRET OF PERSONALITY, by George Trumbull Ladd, LL.D., is published by Longmans, Green and Co., Fourth Ave. and 30th St., New York, and 39 Paternoster Row, London, Bombay, Calcutta, and Madras, at \$1.50 net.

This interesting book is in sympathy dedicated "To those who at present lament the appalling waste of personal values."

This volume is designed to supplement the four books. (What Can I Know? What Ought I to do? What Should I Believe? What May I Hope?) by carrying the discussion more fully over into the domain of religious faith of the essentially Christian type. The author has aimed throughout to make the book especially adaptable to the present time which is testing so severely the faith of men and women the world over.

SOCIAL PROBLEMS AND CHRISTIAN IDEALS—Short Papers on Points of Importance in The Reconstruction of Society on Christian Lines, is edited by E. A. Wesley, M.A., Rural Dean of Liverpool South, and J. R. Darbyshire. M. A. Vicar of St. Luke, Liverpool. The publishers are Longmans, Green & Co., Fourth Ave. and 30th St., New York, and 39 Paternoster Row, London. The price is \$1.00 net.

The reports were prepared by selected writers. The papers are interesting but would have been much more forceful and useful if where specific reforms are advocated details of the method were included. Practical persons are looking for practical suggestions and persons who prepare such reports should possess practical knowledge and organizing ability and the reviewer suspects they have those qualities, but for one reason or another cannot be as definite as perhaps they would wish.

THE GREAT MODERN FRENCH STORIES was compiled and edited with an introduction by Willard Huntington Wright. The book is issued by the Musson Book Company of Toronto, and by Boni and Liveright, of New York.

The stories are selected in such a way as to give the reader a comprehensive idea of the progress of the art of the modern short story in France. Each author has made a definite contribution to French letters; and each story represents its author's best and most characteristic work. The translations are the most accurate obtainable in English.

The introductory essay is a critical survey of French literature from the decay of classicism at the close of the Eighteenth century to the beginning of the war and contains a scholarly discussion of every important modern French writer.

In addition there is an adequate biography of each author represented and a valuable detailed bibliography. The book unlike most collections of the kind gratifies one's desire for the highest type of literary entertainment and also gives one an accurate knowledge concerning the different steps in the development of modern French fiction.