

We confess to being charmed with the humanity of the book; it reminds one of Izaak Walton's bright reflections, with this difference, Izaak could calmly recommend for taking pike the perch as *the longest lived fish on a hook*, and use a frog as though you loved him that he may live the longer to tempt the fish on the barbed steel. Mabel Osgood Wright has learnt Wordsworth's maxim—

"Never to blend our pleasure or our pride
With sorrow of the meanest thing that feels."

Since many years ago we essayed a worm upon a hook and gazed upon its wriggings, we sympathized with Don Juan in his moralizing:—

"And angling, too, that solitary vice,
Whatever Izaak Walton sings or says:
The quaint, old, cruel coxcomb in his gullet
Should have a hook, and a small trout to pull it."

"Poor little birds," writes our authoress as she speaks of enemies, "they do not realize that man with all his higher intelligence is really the most relentless of all. The other enemies kill for food only, man kills for food casually, for decorative feathers wantonly, and for scientific research plausibly, with the apology that the end and aim is knowledge." Never kill for the sake of killing is a maxim we would brand on every sportsman's gun. Thanks, fair authoress of Birdcraft, for your tender reminders.

The book is not written in scientific but in popular language, and is full of quiet reflections to relieve the dullness of mere description, of which the closing paragraph to the chapter on the building of the nest may be selected as an example: "The building of the nest will raise many questions in your mind. Do both birds take part in building? Does the female select the site and do the work, and the male simply supply her with materials? Very pretty tales are to be told of the rejection of unsuitable stuff by the particular wife of a non-discriminating spouse and the consequent squabble. Alack! did not the labour question as that of the equality of the sexes begin as near to Eden as the building of the nest? But in spite of this *there are still nests!*"

JOHN BURTON.

Recent Fiction.*

A PLEASANT picture of country life in England is presented in "Love and Quiet Life." The scene is laid in Somersetshire about the year 1830, and naturally there are a good many phrases in the dialect of the county which at times puzzle the Canadian reader. The principle characters are Marion Burt and her father, who had come as strangers to the village, and the story turns on the love of Marion for the Squire, a Mr. Hensley, who is quite unworthy of her. In time she finds him to have been a heartless libertine, and, fortunately, she escapes marrying him. The experiences of Mr. Percival, the new rector, with his congregation are interesting. Wishing to introduce a new hymn-book one Sunday he gave out the number of the hymn from it, but according to arrangement there was a dead silence. Then when he tried to proceed with the prayers, "from the chancel burst forth the lusty voice of Mr. John Culliford, 'Let us sing to the praise and glory of God the wold hundurdth'" which they did, not only in praise but in triumph. Among other good things there is an amusing sketch of the dwelling of the Sutton cavalry, enrolled on account of the Corn Law riots in Bristol and elsewhere:—

Mr. Culliford took up a position in front to instruct and give the word of command. "Now, then," said he, "Zo zoon as I do zay *Draw*—bide zo quiet as mice. But when I do holla *Swords*—out wi'em."

"*Draw*—No, no, Solomon Moggridge. Put un back, put un back. Now then—*Draw*—*Swords*."

* "Love and Quiet Life: Somerset Idylls." By Walter Raymond. New York: Dodd, Mead & Co. Toronto: The Copp, Clark Co. 1895.

"The New Woman: In Haste and at Leisure." By E. Lynn Linton. New York: The Merriam Co. 1895.

"Under the Man-Fig." By M. E. M. Davis. Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. Cambridge: The Riverside Press. Price \$1.25.

"Tribby, The Elf of Argyle." By Charles Nodier, Member of the French Academy. Translation and Introduction by Nathan Haskell Dole. Boston: Estes & Lauriat. 1895.

"The Jewel of Yuys Galon." By Owen Rhoscomyl. London and New York: Longmans, Green & Co. Longman's Colonial Library. 1895.

Seven weapons flashed in the sun like seven o'clock striking: "Now, that's very tidy," shouted Abraham in great delight. "I do call we done that to rights." "Ay! Zo right as ninepence. I waited for the word thik time," boasted Solomon, legitimately proud of having withstood temptation.

The type, paper and general appearance of the book leave nothing to be desired.

When we looked at the title page of "The New Woman" and saw the author's name we guessed pretty well the style of story which was to come and we were not mistaken. The successful advances of women in many fields have in no way mollified the feelings or the pen of Mrs. Lynn Linton and she pours volley after volley into the "Wild Women" as she calls them. The exaggerated characters in this book deserve all they get, but fortunately the type as far as one experience goes is decidedly rare. The opening chapters deal with a boy and girl runaway marriage, which ends in the departure of the one, Sherrard, for Africa where he cherishes his love, and in the return of the other, Phoebe, to her mother's house, where her love evaporates and she becomes the most outrageous of a club of beautiful "wild women." Sherrard, who turns out a first-rate fellow, is adopted by a wealthy Englishman and comes back to Phoebe to discover what she has developed into. She repudiates him, is driven by poverty to make use of his support, but by her brutality, her studied trampling on all his wishes and all he holds dear, she kills his love and cannot win it back when she is disillusioned and wishes to do so. The two men who are aiding the women in their struggle for liberty or license are despicable characters. The story is not pleasant reading, it drags in parts, and altogether will be enjoyed only by those who delight in seeing advocates for women's *rule*, we cannot in this case say women's *rights*, mercilessly scathed. The book will hardly do much towards hindering "the revolt of the daughters" for the caricatures are too much exaggerated, but she succeeds in throwing plenty of ridicule on women of the character that Grant Allen would doubtless like to see multiplied.

"Under the Man-Fig" is a well-told story of life in Texas before and after the Civil War. The Man-Fig is a tree in the middle of the town of Thornham, which got its name from a legend that a Spaniard's blood watered its infant roots and passed into its fruit. Under it the loafers assembled to discuss the events of the town-life and there the reputation of Van Herring, a leading citizen, was ruined. It is on this the story turns. He was unjustly suspected of stealing diamonds from a dying woman, many circumstances conspiring to make him thought guilty in spite of his upright life, and his lips are sealed so that he cannot clear himself. His daughter, a child when the story opens, is a heroine after Sir Walter Scott's heart, and after many vicissitudes all ends well with her. We enjoyed the parts which deal with the faithful slaves, Liberty and Betty, in their comments on the doings of the whites. The story throughout is bright and lively in tone, and the secret of the diamonds is well kept.

When the pages of newspapers teem with advertisements of Tribby, this, that, and the other thing, a story whence du Maurier derived the name is sure to find purchasers. It is a translation of a French book written about seventy years ago by a French Academician dealing with the fairy folk-lore of Argyle. Tribby is an elf, in love with Jeannie, his mortal sweetheart. The style even in a translation is perfect, but the story itself is extremely nebulous, probably intentionally so, and we frankly confess that at times we could not see what connection the part we were reading had to do with the story, or what it all meant. Misty as it is, there are many fine pieces of writing, but want of space forbids quotation.

In the last book on our list we have something more after the Rider Haggard school of fiction. "A Tale of Tall Fights and Reckless Adventure," it is dubbed by the author, and such it certainly is. In some ways it recalls Treasure Island with its buried riches, but Stevenson's distinction and style are wanting. The scene is laid in Wales. It deals with pirates and old legends, and culminates in an extraordinary duel. The attraction of the story is its rapid action, the adventures of the lad who had recently been expelled from school because he fought the head master's pet prize boy, and the devotion of his father's retainers. The dozen illustrations, if glanced at will give a very fair indication of what the story is all about.