

carefully selected from early scientific works. It would hardly do, however, to say that these illustrations were from Natural History. They are all very *unnatural*, and are the product of the childlike imaginations of early world scholars. The title page professes to set forth "some few examples of quaint and bygone beliefs gathered in from divers authorities, ancient and mediæval, of varying degree of reliability." The writer has left no stone unturned to give the world a work that will convey an adequate idea of how the early scholars looked at creation. It is hard to realize that they were serious in many of their beliefs, but the weight of evidence, as Mr. Hulme places it before us, goes to show that the majority, at least, of the writers were convinced of the truth of what they wrote, and that very many of them believed they had seen amazingly strange creatures on land and sea. The books of the "fathers olde" have been thoroughly investigated for material, and although Mr. Hulme professes to give only some few examples, we have more than 300 pages crowded with stories of mermaids and pignies, strange lions and stranger unicorns, of moon-worshipping elephants and talking hyenas, of the phoenix and the roc, of legless birds of paradise, of singing swans and barnacle geese. No department of science is neglected. Birds, beasts, fish, all are represented in the most unique forms; indeed, unless the form was striking, it was not deemed worthy of consideration by these early scientists. Not content with the material at hand they did not hesitate to construct for their readers beings of which the like "never was on sea or land." The most noteworthy of these credulous exaggerators was our own *Manndeville*, a traveller who seems to have had so much of the story faculty that his pen could not resist embellishing with a few details every superstitious belief that came his way. He had his rivals, however, and trustworthy writers as Pliny and Marco Polo seem to have been almost as credulous as the *Munchausen* of England; while Bishop Jordanus, in his "*Mirabilia Descripta*," Munster, in his "*Cosmography*," and Philip De Thann, in his "*Bestiary*," quite cast him into the shade.

Mr. Hulme starts out with the intention of treating nearly all these superstitions seriously. In his opening paragraph he says: "While we shall undoubtedly find from time to time strange errors that greater opportunity of observation has in these latter days rectified, and encounter many things that may provoke a smile, we must in the forefront of our remarks very definitely assert that much of the literary work of our ancestors in this branch of study is worthy of high commendation, and that anything approaching scorn or sneer is entirely out of place." This is, no doubt, the proper attitude in which to do justice to any belief or school of beliefs, but Mr. Hulme is, like ourselves, merely human, and when he tells us of stories of bears who enjoyed the sting of the bee as it served as a kind of Worcestershire sauce to the honey; of hippopotami who, when they got too full blooded, carefully punctured their thick hide to let out some of the superfluous blood, and then filled up the hole with Nile mud; of lions who, when attacked by unicorns, took to trees, allowed the unicorns to stick their horns fast in the trunk, and then descended to kill them at leisure—he laughs outright, and we laugh with him.

While the book is a thoroughly scholarly one in the sense that libraries of material have been investigated for illustrations, it is also scholarly in perhaps a higher sense. The writer is thoroughly familiar with the poets, and it is amazing how many quotations he succeeds in introducing into the body of the book from Spenser, Marlowe, Shakespeare, Milton, and others. Shakespeare seems to be most familiar with legendary lore, and there is scarcely a play but has some allusions to superstitious beliefs in strangely created beings—not that Mr. Hulme asks us to believe that Shakespeare put any faith in these things, but the fact that he used them to illustrate his ideas is proof that they were widely accepted by theatre-goers of his day.

We have said enough to give some idea of the mine that the author worked for his book, and yet he says at the close: "We have not used up one hundredth part of the great store of folk-lore and ancient and mediæval science that is open to investigation." He was wise in not giving us more; only the very scientific antiquarian could have followed him through many more pages. Indeed, in his anxiety to give us all about some one subject he has occasionally crowded his page with a confused mass of details, but this is rare, and the reader will skip but little of it.

BRIEFER NOTICES.

Elizabeth Glen, M.B.: The Experiences of a Lady Doctor. By Annie S. Swan. (Toronto: W. Briggs. 1895.) Elizabeth Glen's portrait forms the frontispiece to this volume and gives us the idea of a handsome young woman, intelligent and strong without being unfeminine or mannish. "I have always," said the the author, "considered Elizabeth Glen to be a beautiful woman, and she is so still. . . . Rather above the middle height, straight as a pole, well moulded, and elegantly dressed, a sweet, grave, attractive face, with a mobile yet firm mouth, and glorious grey eyes capable of a bewildering change of expression—such is my friend as she appears to me; beautiful, womanly, lovable exceedingly." Elizabeth Glen was the only daughter of a Scotch proprietor and as girl and woman had loved the only son of the proprietor of a neighbouring estate. It was all but certain that they would marry when her expressed purpose of studying medicine led to a misunderstanding between them. He went abroad and subsequently married another lady, who died not long afterwards. Elizabeth Glen became a physician in London, and the volume before us contains some stories of her experience as a doctor, and they are extremely good stories, such as one reads without laying down the book. The last chapter of all tells of her meeting with her early lover and of what then happened, which our readers must find out for themselves. The portrait at the beginning of the book looks as though it represented some real person, and so it may. The heroine may be actually an Elizabeth Glen, or she may have some other prototype, or she may be the creation of Mrs. Swan. But, however, this may be, we are glad to make her acquaintance, and hope there may be many more such in the world.

Half Hours With the Best Composers. (Boston: J. B. Millet Company).—This is a work of great merit. The J. B. Millet Company did a good thing when they brought out their very excellent and comprehensive work "Famous Composers," and that it was a necessity can be easily imagined when one thinks of the number sold, some 30,000 copies. In this present work, "Half Hours," which, by the way, comes to us through A. G. Virtue, of this city, general agent for Canada, we have presented to the music lover, musician and amateur, elegantly engraved and meritorious pieces by popular classical composers, including selections from thirty of the best American writers, such as Macdowell, Arthur Bird, Ethelbert Nevin, Reginald De Koven, Adolf M. Forester, Chadwick, Arthur Foote, Paine, Liebling, and Mason. These and many others have written original compositions expressly for this publication. This is certainly a most important feature, and as Theodore Thomas says, "a genuine indorsement of American talent." Another interesting feature is that the portraits of these thirty composers will serve as a frontispiece, and will be followed by a necessarily brief biographical sketch, with a list of the composer's principal works. The editor is Mr. Karl Klauser, a musician of wide experience and culture, who is familiar with the whole field of musical literature, and who has been for many years in almost constant intercourse with the greatest musicians of our time. The work will doubtless circulate widely, and as it is sold by subscription in thirty parts, each containing fifty-two pages, at sixty cents per part, it will not be expensive. It is issued at the rate of two parts a month, and sold exclusively by subscription.

Oowikapun: or How the Gospel Reached the Nelson River Indians. By Egerton R. Young. (Toronto: Wm. Briggs. 1895.)—We cannot tell how much of this pretty book is fact, and how much is fiction. But it contains a very interesting story, gives a graphic account of Indian life and customs, and shows us how the Indian mind reaches out for the truth and receives it. The name of the hero signifies "One who is longing for light," and that of the heroine, Astumastao, "One who dwells in the sunshine"—a very charming creation, if it is a creation. The story of Oowikapun, from its first chapter, when he first encounters Christian life in the person and home of Memotas, onwards through many perilous adventures from wild beasts and wild men, to the winning of Astumastao and the adoption of the gospel by the Indians of the Nelson River makes up a narrative which will be read with interest and pleasure by old and young.