

ing breeze, and all the array of Wedderburn's orchids was shrivelled and prostrate. But Wedderburn himself was bright and garrulous upstairs in the glory of his strange adventure."

What the adventure was, of course, the story tells, and it is a warning to all hunters after orchids. "The Treasure in the Forest" is another story which is told in a calm, natural kind of way, but is positively horrible in its incidents. Its *finale* is as follows:

"Abruptly he stopped, and, sitting down by the pile of ingots, and resting his chin upon his hands, and his elbows upon his knees, stared at the distorted, but still-stirring, body of his companion. Hangh's grin came in his mind again. The dull pain spread towards his throat and grew slowly in intensity. Far above him a faint breeze stirred the greenery, and the white petals of some unknown flower came floating down through the gloom." The last scene of all is thus in charity hidden, but it is worked up to carefully. The diamond maker was a curious specimen of humanity, and the reader is not quite certain whether he was a fraud or a genius. We have the greatest pleasure in recommending these stories.

"Strange Survivals," by Baring Gould, is a collection of notices of curious traditions and customs still remaining, or recently in existence, in Europe. They are the traces of primeval manners and beliefs. Foundations of buildings, gables, ovens, beds, umbrellas, and dolls—all are dealt with. The recurrence of religious revivals, with their psychological problems, form the subject of a separate paper. The gallows are not a pleasant subject to read about, but Mr. Baring Gould takes us to their foot. There are a great many superstitions traced in these pages to their origin. For instance:

In 1885 Holsworthy Parish Church was restored, and in the course of restoration the south-west angle wall of the church was taken down. In it, embedded in the mortar and stone, was found a skeleton. The wall of this portion of the church was faulty and had settled. According to the account given by the masons who found the ghastly remains, there was no trace of a tomb, but every appearance of the person having been buried alive and hurriedly. A mass of mortar was over the mouth, and the stones were huddled about the corpse as though hastily heaped about it; then the wall was leisurely proceeded with.

Mr. Gould's explanation is, "And now without further quotation of examples what do they mean? They mean this—that in remote times a sacrifice of some sort was offered at the completion of a building; but not only at the completion—the foundation of a house, a castle, a bridge, a town, even of a church, was laid in blood." Many other examples to prove the statement are given besides the one we have selected. Our readers must not fancy that they can skim through the pages of Mr. Gould's collection. They are highly interesting, but require study. Some of his inferences seem far-fetched, but every paper is suggestive. There are many wood cuts scattered through the book to illustrate the text. They are a decided assistance to the reader. Altogether the book is of permanent value.

"The King of Andaman" is a curious title, and when one takes up the book it is with a discontented feeling. The question naturally arises, What on earth can it mean? The Andaman Islands are away off in the Bay of Bengal. Who ever heard of a king of Andaman? And he is a "saviour of society." The conclusion is jumped to that it is one of those new books dealing with impossible or imaginary Utopias. The quotation on the fly-leaf, "He weaves, and is clothed with derision," does not assist much in guessing at the contents. We open the book and find the scene laid in Scotland. The story progresses a long way before Andaman comes in at all. But it does come in, and in an entirely novel and interesting manner. The hero of the book, the Master of Hutcheon, is a distinctively new creation. He is a character by himself, like Scott's types. Even his failings lean to virtue's side. We can assure our readers that they will not regret making the acquaintance of the Master of Hutcheon. Ilkastane is the name of a Scotch village where weavers mostly live. These weavers, in 1849, were mostly Chartists, and the Government did not approve of their proceedings. George Hutcheon, the brother of the hero, and Fergus O'Rhea, the Master's evil genius, are both driven out of the country. Several years pass, and in 1856 the story re-opens. The relations of the Master to his fellow-townsmen were those of somewhat a feudal character. Although Hutcheon was a weaver, like the men he lived among, they knew he was of ancient

descent, of a family ruined in the '45, and they revered him accordingly. Fergus O'Rhea comes back, and "the Maister" is told of the death of his brother, and succeeds to his brother's fortune, made in foreign parts. Then O'Rhea, for his own purposes, plays on Hutcheon's simplicity and single-mindedness, and concocts the scheme of Andaman. A meeting of the inhabitants is held, and all hands resolve to follow the Master. O'Rhea becomes the Master's right-hand man, and his plots, and the counterplots of a French-Scotchman, named Lepine, are woven behind the Master's back. There are many subsidiary characters in the book, all strongly drawn. The romance is furnished by Aimée Lepine, the Franco-Scot's daughter. The only fault we have to find with the book is the *dénouement*. That the party could start off from a port in Scotland in the manner described in the last chapter is too much of an impossibility, even for fiction. We cannot say it spoils the story, but we would have preferred another, even if a more tragic, ending. In spite of this complaint, which we very gently urge, we most strongly praise the book. It contains one entirely new, unconventional character, like no other character in fiction we remember. It is consistently worked out. There is plenty of incident. The descriptions are well done, and in every way the book will repay perusal.

The following description of the return of a Highland regiment will serve as a specimen of the style of the author:

"It was only later that Hamish understood what that meant. Then he but saw with all his eyes these great, noble, bearded men, and believed they appeared—halt, maimed, and worn as they were—fresh from the heat and horror of battle. He expected to see them wearing their swords, bare and blood-stained; but, though all bore knapsacks and bayonets at their sides, many did not even carry muskets. Yet, when the chief piper swelled his broad chest and blew into his pipes, and the other pipers did likewise, and the escorted soldiers formed fours, and when to the shrill martial strains of "The Campbells are coming!" they all marched away proudly swinging kilt and plaid, then Hamish's heart and soul went out to the Highlanders; he felt as if he were a soldier himself, and invested with the glory of military prowess. He tramped and trotted along with the jostling crowd, by the leg of a stalwart soldier. As they marched on to the castle, with the skirling pipes in their van, the crowd attracted to itself more and more exciting spirits. At one point a hale old woman, wrinkled and ruddy as a winter apple, burst forth from the crowd, with a cry of, 'Oh, Geordie! Eh, my bonnie bairn!' She was raised in the arms of a big soldier, who exclaimed 'Mither!' kissed her, and set her down again before she was aware. Then the two tramped along hand in hand, without another word. The crowd laughed and cheered in the maddest sympathy. The laughter and cheers were redoubled, and dashed here and there with women's tears, when a poor old man, who had been caught away by the general excitement from his wretched occupation of vending watercress (or 'sourrocks'), pushed through the crowd, and, standing on its inner edge, bestowed handful after handful of his stock-in-trade on the passing heroes: till not a blade remained in his basket. It was so spontaneous and so completely generous an offering, although it was so poor, that it could not fail to touch all hearts. Tears sprang to the eyes of even the grim, bearded soldiers themselves, and Hamish was moved in a way which he could not understand."

Letters to the Editor.

SIR,—It is constantly assumed by you that anyone who holds Continental Unionist opinions is isolated and ought to leave the country; though why a citizen should be compelled to leave a free country because he is at the time singular in his opinions it would not be easy, consistently with the principles of liberty, to explain. But you would, no doubt, be sorry to mislead your readers as to the fact. The Continental Union Association offers by advertisement in a weekly paper to send its literature to anyone who applies for it. There have been not less than twenty-eight hundred applications during the last year and a half, and they frequently come accompanied by assurances, from persons who cannot fail to be well informed, of the prevalence of Unionist opinions. Those who hold these opinions will some day undoubtedly speak their minds.

W. D. GREGORY.