

THE BOOK SHELF.

"Studies in the Life of Jesus."

Mr. William H. Sallmon, who has recently left the care of the management of the Young Men's Christian Association to organize a similar work in Australia, put into print the results of his study and experiment in the carrying on of religious work at Yale. Mr. Sallmon understood his work well and showed a great deal of ability and clear-headedness in the way in which he conducted it. His success in it is a guaranty of the value of the two little books which have recently come from the press of the International Committee of the Young Men's Christian Association. One is entitled "Studies in the Life of Jesus." Its author announces that it was published in response to the general demand expressed at the various Summer schools for Bible study for a course in the life of Jesus, which had been tried in some college community and found to be workable. This little book of one hundred and fifty pages, which you can slip into an inside pocket, is, of course, purely an outline. Mr. Sallmon says that practically this outline has been used for six years in the Y. M. C. A. of Yale and that it was presented to the Northfield Conference. The book is meant for practical Bible class work. At the same time, it isn't useful for those who do not make a serious study of the life of Jesus. No book of this kind, of course, should attempt to lead a Bible class through a year's work without a good deal of study on their part, although a Sunday school, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, is run on the plan that it does not need particular intelligence or any serious amount of mental effort to conduct it or gain its benefits. Of course, those Bible classes which Mr. Sallmon or other leaders of the Young Men's Christian Association will conduct, and such as Mr. Sallmon taught at Bridgeport, Connecticut, does not come under this latter head of classification.

The book is sufficiently technical to be accurate and show its scholarly study, and the practical quotations and suggestions which are put in from time to time show a mind mentally alive to the problem of inculcating the spirit of the life which is taught.

The "Studies in the Parables of Jesus," a supplementary booklet on the same general plan, also grew out of the writer's experience on the work of Bible study as adopted by the Young Men's Christian Association of Yale. The parables of Jesus form a distinct part of the regular course. Mr. Sallmon says that the outlines presented in this little book are merely the notes from the author's note book as they were taught to the class at Yale and to the class of business men at Bridgeport under the auspices of the Association. The object of this book is merely suggestive and only to serve as a basis for further study.

"The Personal Equation."

If fortune has been kind, here is at least one friend with whom we may disagree; which means that Professor Harry Thurston Peck has as decided a mind about most things as we have, and that, as everyone knows, is the spice of life. For in "The Personal Equation" we are continually piqued by points of disagreement and yet find a fascination in the view with which we feel quite at liberty to differ.

Here are brought together a varied assortment ranging from impressions of W. D. Howells and his work as affected by different environments, to a study of Grover Cleveland and his claim to statesmanship; this, with a discussion on political oratory, in which the text is Mr. Bryan's Chicago speech, and an entertaining and curious account of "The Migration of Popular Songs." Indeed, the table of contents in some way suggests Shakespeare and the musical glasses through it is all pleasant reading, and what is more, stimulating and suggestive. The essays on Marcel Prévost and George Moore are especially valuable to us as studies from an intelligent standpoint by a clean American mind.

One does not care to be too critical but we cannot help wishing that Professor Peck had given his work further revision before putting it into book form, and so had removed as far as possible the traces of transient publication which are over most of it. Such paragraphs as, "Every one in the Li-

terary Shop has whooped it up so long as people could be induced to listen to the row," are hardly consistent with the dignity of his subject. We will not quarrel with the almost unavoidable use of French words and phrases in the article on Marcel Prévost because of the subject—but why use the German "Epochmachend" and "Tendezroman" when the English equivalent is so obvious?

It is surprising that Messrs. Harpers should put such good work into such tawdry covers. Some friend in the Grolier Club ought in kindness to give them a lesson in taste.

"An African Millionaire."

As long as the doings of Mons. Lecoq or Sherlock Holmes, Esq., command an audience so long will such stories as these of Mr. Grant Allen's find a ready sale. The continued success of Dr. Doyle's detective stories has proved beyond question that hundreds of readers find pleasure in such ingenious marriage of mystery and logic, and on this ground both author and publisher of the book under hand have every reason to expect a generous share of that return which is most highly prized in this mercenary age—and it may be said as truly that the public gets a good run for its money. Mr. Allen has very wisely departed somewhat from the rather too well worn (though successful) path of his predecessors in this particular kind of fiction, and has transferred our interest from any Bow Street "consulting detective," whose boundless knowledge and Protean ingenuity is employed in hunting down crime, to a certain Colonel Clay, who possesses a score of aliases, marvelous cleverness in the matter of disguise and expedient, and simply colossal "nerve," who brings such varied talents to bear in the cheating of justice in general and the African millionaire in particular. It adds as much to the interest as to the humor of the situation the way he fastens upon this one productive source of illicit revenue, time and again getting around his suspicions and into his purse, until at last he is run to earth. He never once repeats himself, he never once disappoints his audience, and only once does he disappoint himself, and that was to save to the book at least a semblance of a moral lesson. I believe the best of these stories have now been dramatized, and if the "African Millionaire" is as entertaining on the stage as in the book, much may be hoped for the play.

"King Arthur and the Table Round."

No more attractive edition of this ever beautiful story has been given a book-loving public than has come in these two volumes from the Houghton's Riverside Press. "Book-loving" public is written advisedly. For this best of all texts in true courtesy and valor appeals, after all, only to those of refined and gentle tastes, and that class unfortunately is yet in the minority. But to such as these this latest edition of those knightly tales will come as a true pleasure. Bound in boards of a quaker gray with white backs and corners, the very outward and visible sign of the book is scholarly and inviting, and as one looks further for an inward and spiritual grace there lies before him letter press so perfect, initial letters so quaint and graceful, a paper so soft and clear, that heart and hand are pleased as truly as is the mind which dips into the quaint old chronicle of Trestien of Troyes. The volumes are such that one can speak of them only in tones of the highest praise. The introductory account of Arthurian romance, furnished by Mr. W. W. Newell, is at once fitting and entertaining.

"The Federal Judge."

The influence of English writers writing English stories is still so strong upon us, and our reading from childhood has so saturated us with their form of fiction, that it is a matter for congratulation when an author shows himself free from that dominating sway. In "The Federal Judge" (Houghton, Mifflin & Company, \$1.25), Mr. Charles K. Lush has given us a thoroughly American story. The leading charac-

ter sits upon the bench, to be sure, but there is no trace of either wig or gown. It is a study of native types and manners in that part of our country which is coming to be known as the Middle West, founded on recent facts and events quite near enough to the present moment to include a number of Populists, an attempted railroad strike and a little essay in government by injunction.

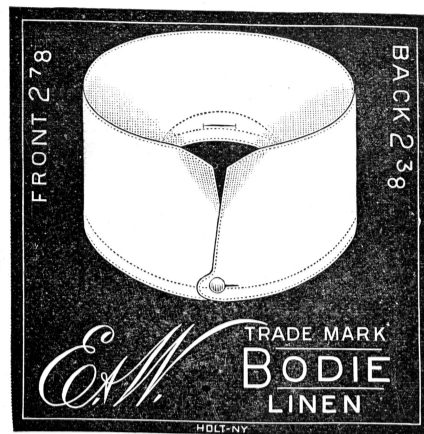
Though so large a factor in our national life, it takes courage to introduce politics into a novel. Mr. Lush has accomplished it successfully and shown us that it is good material when properly used. Judge Tracy Dunn is a well-studied and consistent creation. We all know the man, dignified in court, popular outside of it, well-read in his profession, an enthusiastic fisherman and still finding time for a scientific hobby.

We have not space to go into the story in detail, and may only hint here that upright, just and firm in his conception of duty as is the Judge, he yet drifts from the firm anchorage he had made and comes perilously near shipwreck, all through the wiles of an unscrupulous schemer who is aided by the very virtues of his victim.

The other characters are all well conceived. Gardwell, the necessary villain, a manipulator of railroads and political, as well as financial, affairs; Emmersley, the young populist lawyer; the Judge's daughter, around whom centers the love interest; her mother, and old Rufus, a G.A.R. veteran and the Judge's firm and faithful adherent, with all the minor personages, are native types, no one of whom does not rightly belong to these United States and the last half of the nineteenth century.

It is quite evident, nevertheless, and in spite of a plot that is well-constructed, natural, and consistent, that this is Mr. Lush's first attempt at novel-writing. He shows certain faults that are the faults of a novice. His style is commonplace, and wholly lacks the polish which will come with larger experience.

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