

Poppea. By this name, once borne by that wife of Nero who succumbed to the effects of a kick administered by that monster, Gilbert had her christened, and Poppea of the Post Office became the cognomen by which she was known all over the district. That nobody's child is everybody's child was evidenced by the assistance afforded Gilbert in her bringing-up, and Poppea is educated as far as her environment permitted as a child of gentle breeding would be, but does not dream that Gilbert is not her father. Then, quite by accident, comes the revelation that she is only a waif and a stray, which temporarily unbalances her reason. But "all's well that ends well," and Poppea's birth proves more than respectable, and her father, who turns out to be the most prominent and the most wealthy man of the district would fain have welcomed her at the head of his table. But the author, with an eye to her moral, makes Poppea faithful to Gilbert, and the story ends with Poppea married to the man of her choice, and

of the class known as "Cockatoo farmers." We have received our copy through the courtesy of George Robertson and Co.

A Flight from Siberia. By Vaclav Sierosewski. (Hutchinson, 6/.)

Vaclav Sierosewski, the Polish author of this work, possesses many things in common with the Russian school of novelists. The plot of "A Flight from Siberia" is of the simplest, being simply a description of life among the Polish exiles in the Siberian village of Jourjuy, of their preparations for escape, their attempt, their wanderings over unmapped country, and the terrible irony of the end of their journey. The many characters of the story become familiar to us in the same way that our fellow travellers on a long journey become known to us. Though we know nothing of their past or future, we learn their gestures, their tempers, their moods, and we instinctively deduce from these their temperaments. The observation

is subject to no restraining marriage law. To this end, and greatly to the scandalization of her circle of friends, acquaintances and society in general, she leaves New York with Mr. Langford for an extended cruise in the Pacific, in his beautiful steam yacht. Shortly, however, when the novelty has worn off, Katherine discovers that Langford has a wife living, and on charging him with this, he shows himself in his true colours, and Katherine, for the first time, realizes what it means for a woman to sin against the conventions. An awful scene takes place in which the primitive woman in Katherine rises uppermost, and she lashes out with such violence as to render Langford unconscious. Then she determines, at the risk of her life, to make her escape that night, though she knows that they are hundreds of miles from land. Fortunately a motor launch belonging to the yacht is trailing in the wake of the vessel, and hastily provisioning it, from the stores in the dining saloon, she makes her escape unnoticed, and after perils innumerable, is

Broken Earthenware. By Harold Begbie. (London: Hodder and Stoughton. Auckland: Wildman and Arey. 3/6.)

There can be no doubt whatever left upon the reader's mind at the conclusion of this book as to the sincerity of Mr. Begbie's belief in conversion, as effected by the methods of the Salvation Army. There can also be no doubt that any religion that can transform a thief into an honest man, change a drunkard into a total abstainer, a liar into a speaker of the truth, an immoral man into a strict moralist; a bad husband, a bad son, a bad father, and a bad citizen, into a good one, is a religion of the proper sort. And while we do not go all the way with Mr. Begbie, we hail him as a social reformer worthy to rank, at least in spirit, with that greatest of social reformers, Charles Dickens. Mr. Begbie's book should be of inestimable value to the Salvation cause.

The Land of Long Ago. Eliza Calvert Hall. (Boston: Little, Brown and Co. Auckland: Wildman and Arey. 3/6.)

Readers of the inimitably-written "Aunt Jane of Kentucky" will welcome this new volume, which portrays daintily and soulfully scenes and reminiscences from Aunt Jane's storeroom of memories. In chapter one, Aunt Jane echoes Mark Twain's sentiments, without his satire, on foreign travel. Then we have a history of a house that was a "wedding gift." "The Courtship of Miss Anaryllis" takes the reader back a century, when men knew what they wanted and took it. A delightful chapter is that which describes the Browning Society, and it would be well if all marriage problems could be settled as easily as that "in Goshen." "The Reformation of Sam Amos" is a delightful example of "Blue Grass" humour. "War Time" conjures up reminiscences of the Civil War of America, and the "Watch-Meeting" brings this quaintly charming old world book to a close. Under the guise of sentiment, or homely humour, many solid truths are instilled or driven home. It is a book that must appeal to the best in man, for there is not a line in it that is not instructive or ideal, and we can only reiterate Mr. Roosevelt's opinion and advice, which he wrote, "It is very wholesome and attractive: Be sure that you read it." And having read it, ask its author for more!



A TRUE SPORTSMAN.

"There 'e is, Bill, up in that tree. Blackbird—that's what 'e is. Don't 'e sing a treat!"
"Ah, don't 'e just . . . see if you can cop 'im wiv a stone!"

in possession of her rightful social position. We have thoroughly enjoyed this simple homely book, which brims over with quiet happiness, quaint humour, and graphic pen pictures of rural people and rural life and customs, and a cheery optimism of things in general.

"The Waybacks Again, or Love at Dingo Flats": By Henry Fletcher. (Australia: Edward Dunlop and Co., George Robertson and Co., and all booksellers.)

The fact that the sales of the Wayback series have nearly reached a quarter of a million will be easily believed by those of Mr. Fletcher's admirers who have followed the fortunes of the Waybacks from the beginning. In the "Waybacks Again," we are shown the Wayback girls grown to womanhood, and each looking out for an eligible parti. We have also a highly diverting account of how "Dads" and "Mums" bid against one another to the tune of forty-nine pounds for an antiquated piano, worth five, and a side-splitting story is told of the Waybacks' adventures with some "quiet" Angora goats. Dads himself relates a story of "a memorable pounding case." We are not sure that we approve of the Wayback methods of catching a husband, but we strongly approve of their methods of keeping one. We like "Dads" and "Mums," and the Wayback girls and boys, and we like their way of life, which is simple and natural and strenuous and cleanly, as wayback life ought to be. We have nothing but praise for Mr. Fletcher's work, which is clean, breezy, witty and spontaneously humorous, and which reveals him as a writer of no mean observation, and as possessing a keen, sympathetic understanding of the mixed aims and motives that animate and rule the lives

shown in the novel is so minute that it often seems unnatural; we are given a picture of the snowy streets, the stuffy living rooms of Jourjuy's huts such as our own eyes and brain would scarcely supply us with, for nothing is more strange than the way the eye has of giving an impression while skirting details. The novel is evidently written out of intimate knowledge, and nothing in it is more impressive than the idea of isolation it gives us, and as a result, the mean vices, the jealousy and wanton selfishness of a village community shut away from all communication with the outer world. The account of the hopeless journey is heart-breaking in its atmosphere of helplessness. "A Flight from Siberia" is immensely impressive through its sincerity; there is no attempt at the dramatic in it, or even at the pathetic.

The Island of Regeneration:

By Cyrus Townsend Brady. (New York: The Dodd, Mead Co., Auckland: Wildman and Arey. Price 3/6.)

A more strikingly original plot, or a more ideal development, or a more highly satisfactory denouement, from a moral and a sentimental point of view, it would be impossible to imagine than this superb story, which bears the exceedingly felicitous, and uncommon title of "The Island of Regeneration." It is a complete and crushing answer to the vicious and immoral reasoning of books of the "Woman who Did" type, and the like. Katherine Brenton, a highly finished product of University education holds peculiar views on the subject of matrimony and determines to become no man's wife under the bond demanded by civil or ecclesiastical law in America. She makes a convert of Valentine Arthur Langford, a millionaire, and they agree to live together as man and wife,

cast ashore in a terrible storm. Waking from a sleep of exhaustion, Katherine's eyes rest upon one of the most splendid specimens of masculine humanity she has ever seen, who turns out to be, like herself, shipwrecked, but with the difference that he had been cast away twenty-four years before, as a child, and had lost absolutely, all sense of time, articulate speech, instinct of sex, knowledge of the conventions of morality, in short, a man grown to man's estate with little more knowledge, as the world counts knowledge, than an infant. So far we have outlined the story for the benefit of our readers, and nothing is left but to advise them to finish the story for themselves, and learn how in educating this primitive man, Katherine Brenton works out her own regeneration. Much that is difficult to reconcile with probability will be found in this sterling romance. But the underlying motive, the boldness of the conception, and the ideality of the subject are so truly great, that much may be allowed in imaginative licence. Dr. Brady will, we are sure, in future be known as the author of this book, which will add not a little to his already high reputation as one of the American novelists who count.

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