

proved in the MS. by the author's father, Dr. Samuel Sloane, from whom many valuable suggestions were received.

**The Hero of Herat:** By Maud D'iver. (London: Constable and Co., per George Robertson and Co., Melbourne. 3/6.)

The amount of research which must have gone to the making of this book impels my warmest admiration, independent of the fact that the book must be held a valuable contribution, not only to historic, but to Imperialistic, literature. And never was there a time when the need for the making of such books as this was so great. More than once it occurred to me during the reading of this book that its proper place was in biographical literature. But biography is read by the few, romance by the many, and, strictly speaking, this novel is one that has been plainly written with a dual purpose. The first is to recall to the memory of all true Britishers the memory of Major Eldred Pottinger, C.B., "the hero of Herat," and one of the greatest and most intently noble of all England's Empire-builders in India. The second is to promote and spread the spirit of Imperialism wherever the English tongue is spoken, for wherever it is spoken and English blood runs redly and warmly, Mrs Diver's books are read. As indicating the manner of man Eldred Pottinger was, I quote an utterance of Sir Henry Lawrence, K.C.B., about this hero: "India, fertile in heroes, has shown since the days of Clive, no man of greater or earlier promise than Eldred Pottinger. Yet, hero as he was, you might have sat for weeks beside him at table and never discovered that he had seen a shot fired." The principal scenes of the story are laid in Herat, Afghanistan, before the first Afghan war, and its period is that of the John Company, in days when private commercial enterprise was eager to avail itself of the services of England's best and bravest spirits in the opening up of trade routes—spirits whose highest endeavours was prompted and animated by the patriotism that lay next to the love of God in their hearts. And none were so successful as the Empire-builders who had this love of God, as the records of English rule in India can testify. Of this glorious company was Major Pottinger." I do not purpose to recount even in outline the part Mrs Diver's hero played during the siege of Herat, by the Persian army, nor the part he played in the subsequent events that led up to the first English war with Afghanistan, as that would spoil the story for my readers. The

story is to have a sequel, as Major Eldred's career is only dealt with up to that crisis in Afghan affairs which necessitated the recall from Herat of the "Mission" sanctioned by Lord Auckland, Governor-General of India, of which Pottinger had been the head and front.

**Valserine and Other Stories:** By the author of "Marie Claire"; translated by John N. Raphael. (London: George Bell and Sons, Auckland: Upton and Co. Cloth, 3/6.)

That Madame Andoux' second story would excite quite the same furor of interest as her first was unreasonable to expect. Nevertheless, the reader who revelled in "Marie Claire" will be able to extract quite as much pleasure from "Valserine" since it is written with the

same matchless simplicity of style and language, the same keenness of observation of people and things, the same attention to detail, and the same strong and sympathetic undercurrent of feeling for erring and suffering humanity that characterised the author's first success. Whether she has it in her to improve or widen her present power of depiction remains yet to be seen. Though like Mr. Raphael, these stories have given me much pleasure to read, and though I think them equal to the story of "Marie Claire," one looks for an author or an artist in each recurring presentation to achieve something greater or different than before. But only in this respect does "Valserine" disappoint me. Under the same cover will be found in the original French, the thirteen stories that comprise the book. The story I like best is "La Fiancee." But I do wish Mad-



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