

remarked of "Plays, Pleasant and Unpleasant," that the author grouped together "as much good and bad work in one book as perhaps was ever brought together in these two kinds since the printing of books began. There is a kind of play-writing which the French call 'Le Theatre Impossible,' which they print in books that make excellent reading, but which no sane stage manager would put on the boards. With one exception, Mr Shaw's plays are of this impossible kind." The one exception is "Arms and the Man"; for it was difficult to deny, even in those bleak days of the drama, that a thing that had already achieved a fair run was really playable. But observe: 1913 asserts that Mr Shaw's most noticeable quality is a command of stage mechanism; 1898 asserted that Mr Shaw's most noticeable defect was a lack of stage technique and (in the quoted instance) appealed to the French. And now, here is a French critic delivering nine lectures at the Sorbonne upon the plays of this questionable person, choosing to publish one of them as a separate booklet, and selecting for that purpose a lecture devoted solely to the Moberish technique of the Shavian drama. Thus the latest critic allows him both the literary excellences conceded by 1898, and the dramatic gifts acknowledged by 1913. Perhaps there is something in Shaw, after all. "I wish it were possible," concludes Mr Sampson, "to phrase M. Augustin Hamon's lecture. I hope I haven't read it with my eyes shut, for it seems to do little more than say that Shaw's plays are humorous because they are funny, and to support that desperate statement by solemn appeals to Bergson. Very probably it would read much better in its place among the other lectures. We shall see. Incidentally, I ask whether the character called Bryan in one place, Brian in another, and clearly intended for Bohun, is a French version of the legal gentleman whom Mr Shaw borrowed from "Great Expectations," or is merely a whim of the translators. Likewise, who are "Bramsdien," "Peter Kerigan," and "Bramden Howard Allan"? Can the last be intended for "Maud Hallam"?

REVIEWS.

The New Humpty Dumpty: By Daniel Chaucer. (London: John Lane. Auckland: Upton and Co. 3/6.)

"The Simple Life, Limited," praised Mr Daniel Chaucer to be a witty and an accomplished writer. "The New Humpty Dumpty" proves that there are no heights in fiction that he cannot reach. "The New Humpty Dumpty" is mainly the history of an idealist, one Sergius Mikhailovitch, who sacrificed his life in the attempt to establish the deposed young King of Galicia on his throne, after sacrificing two fortunes to the Socialist Movement. Exactly what we admire most in this superbly written story it is difficult to say. Nothing could be more diverse than the character of the dramatic personae that figure in this exciting and thrilling human drama. Yet each are drawn with a vividness and a completeness that is marvellous when

one considers how numerous they are. Imagine a young King, who hasn't a soul above mechanism, a sordid American millionaire, a stingy Queen Mother, an English Lord and Lady, a second-rate, plebeian journalist, who suffers from swelled-head, a beauty actress, a coquette, an impossible, out of England, chauffeur, and an idealist in conspiracy to put a penniless King upon a disputed throne in a semi-barbaric country, and you, my readers, may guess the sort of maze Mr Chaucer will lead you through before his King is safely seated upon his ancestral throne. Mr Chesterton, some years ago, raised the very pertinent query as to: What was wrong with the world? Mr Chaucer shows very clearly what is wrong with it. He is brilliantly satiric on modernity, on the modern way divorcees are procured, modern company promoting, modern movements, etc. In short, the book is a mordant satire on most of the evils and follies of the day. I have read no more brilliant novel this



A MAGNETIC PERSONALITY.

year, and strongly recommend my readers, if they have not already placed "The New Humpty Dumpty" on their book list, to place it at once.

The Recording Angel: By Corra Harris. (London: Constable and Co. Auckland: Upton and Co.)

No story that I can remember ever brought home so clearly to me the apathy into which the majority of the Southern States fell after the abolition of slavery as this story of "The Recording Angel," whose scenes are laid way down in Georgia. With wonderful fidelity to type, and with rare sympathy, the author has limned a series of portraits of the inhabitants of the little, sleepy town of Ruckersville, in Georgia. Ruckersville had stood still for nearly a century until Jim Bone, the scallywag of the place, had returned from the gold diggings a wealthy man. Bone had left under a cloud, and would probably have left Ruckersville again under another cloud but for meeting Sylvia Story, with whom he fell in love. Then Bone got to work, and, helped by the "Recording Angel," one Amy White, roused the Ruckersvilleites to a sense of what they owed to the town and themselves. For the explanation of the book's title, and for the details of the marvellous changes Bone effected, we refer readers to the story, which is indeed as eminently interesting as it is uplifting, and is, moreover, a very fine piece of writing, literally abounding in the passages of wit and wisdom and subtle meaning designated as epigram.

The Love Dream: By George Vane. (London: John Lane. Auckland: Upton and Co. 3/6.)

This is a story of auto-suggestion. Laurance Drury, youngest son of the Earl of Hargate, and Baldassare di Montreale, son of the Italian Ambassador at St. James', are both in love with Hedwig Wrancyz, a woman of light reputation. Drury and Baldassare have been fast friends since their Eton days, and Baldassare, seeing Drury so deeply infatuated, tries to open his eyes to Hedwig's absolute unworthiness. At this juncture, Hedwig, pretending to fear Baldassare, and, in reality, wanting him out of her way, that she may marry Drury, exclaims passionately in Drury's hearing for deliverance from Baldassare. Thereupon, Drury, impelled by some evil force, goes to Baldassare's rooms and

shoots him. Though suspicion falls on Drury, it cannot be proved that he committed the deed, and he is acquitted. But Baldassare's mother is convinced that Drury had murdered her son, and, being a Sicilian, registers a vow to bring the murder home to him. Though acquitted, Drury is sent to Coventry by society, and he is advised by the English Ambassador at Vienna, of which Embassy he is an attache, to resign his post. By the death of his brother, Drury becomes Earl of Hargate, but not until he had made the irrevocable mistake of marrying Hedwig. On his return to England he is cut by the country, though by this time Hedwig has left him for a wealthy Russian. The rest of the story concerns the son of the unfortunate marriage and the carrying out of the vendetta. Lord Hargate by this time has come to think himself innocent of the murder, considering that it was committed under auto-suggestion. But we are not, in justice to the author, going to divulge any more of this uncommonly told story, which ends much more pleasantly than this inadequate outline would seem to indicate. Lovers either of sentiment or tragedy will be more than satisfied by an investment in "The Love Dream" of Laurance Drury's only child.

BITS FROM NEW BOOKS.

Some George Moore Sayings.

- "Nothing sharpens the witty like promiscuous flirtation."
- "Human nature is very perverse, and we only care to hear of another's happiness when we are the givers of it."
- "As the moon is more interested in earth than any other thing, there is always a woman more interested in a man's mind than in anything else, and is willing to follow it sentence by sentence."
- "England produced Shakespeare; the British Empire the six-shilling novel."
- "The woman who gives most happiness gives most pain."
- "When a woman lies she is more beautiful than when she is merely speaking the truth. Her whole face a-shires, and her soul rises up in her eyes when she drops her hand on one's shoulder, saying, 'Dear, it is quite different.'"
- "There ain't much chance of temptation for them who work 17 hours a day."
- "Keep women! You cannot marry them, and they come to hate the way you walk across the room; remain their lover, and they jilt you at the end of six months."
- "A woman is never satisfied if a man is not a little jealous. From her point of view love would not be complete, without jealousy."
- "There is nothing so consoling as to find that one's neighbour's troubles are at least as great as one's own."—The George Moore Calendar.

Lord Rossmore's Stories.

- "Percy La Touche is the leading sport-man of Ireland. He has a keen sense of humour, and when the late King once playfully hit him over the shoulders with his walking-stick, he turned to H.M. and said, in rather a rueful manner: 'Sir, I don't know whether you've knighted me or broken my collarbone.'"
- "I was lunching once at the Kildare Street Club with Lord Headfort, Lord Farnham, and Lord Portlinton (who was known as 'The Dasher'). The last named declared he had been having electric light bulbs up to 300 deg. Fahrenheit. Farnham (better known as Sammy Maxwell) said: 'Come, George, that's rather steep; why water boils at 212 deg. Fahrenheit.' 'The Dasher' persisted that he had been lying in the electric light at 300 deg. 'Well, well,' said Sammy, drily, 'have it your own way, George, but, at any rate, you're lying in daylight now.'"
- "The late King was a great stickler about the proper 'get up' for the races. At Epsom by some over-ight I was not wearing the silk hat demanded by etiquette. The Prince looked at me critically from top to toe, and said, half in jest and half in reproach: 'Well, Rossmore, have you come r-r-ratting?'—'Things I can tell,' by Lord Rossmore.

Tibbits From Mrs Tibbits.

- "Though no man may be a hero to his valet, yet every man may be a hero to somebody else's butler."
- "It is the way of women to go to extremes. They either take everything or give everything."—"At What Sacrifice," by Annie O. Tibbits

BRIEF AND BRIGHT.

As far as a plain man is able to judge, if a lady followed all the advice given in the "Daily Mirror" beauty book as to what she should do daily, she would never go to bed at all, for, acting upon the advice of this book, upon her chin there would be a "pad of cotton wool soaked in Tinct. Benz." and other menses; on her lips would be a coating of lanoline and "oil of almonds"; on her eyes there would be boric acid, on her eyelashes there would be "benzoated lard," on her eyelids there would be "Extract Hamamelis (distil)"; on her face, powdered Tragacanth; on her nose, "tincture of storax"; on her legs, soap liniment and oil of eucalyptus; on her cheeks, "oxide of zinc." We ask, with tears in our eyes, where on earth is a fond husband to give his wife a thumping kiss if she is coated all over with every article known or unknown to the British Pharmacopoeia?—"Books of To-day and To-morrow."

All well-wishers of Serbia will hope that she will give up any idea of a port on the Adriatic. It is a troublesome thing—a port. If you have a port, you have to have a navy, and think where that lands you. A Blue Water party, two keels to Montenegro's one, costly submarines, and tiresome jokes about the First Lord of the Admiralty.—"By-stander."

Miss Trixie Sawyer, the heroine of a recent novel, has flaxen hair and doll-like features of the type that suggests a kiss in time gains nine. At the table she talked slang with her mouth full. Perhaps if you had taken a syphon and sliced the scent and powder off her face, you might have found some good looks underneath. In this lady's presence you were in great danger of being stabbed to death by hatpins. She had all the tricks of the trade—that mercenary one which is just out for admiration and et ceteras—and she practised arts which were old in the days when Anagnis told Sapphira that "she was the fairest bit of fluff in all Jerusalem."—"Books of To-day and To-morrow."

See the latest style in hats.
 "Awful hats!
 Every freakish brand of bonnet
 That was ever made to sell,
 Each with something spiky on it,
 That will make you when you see it
 Fit to fill a padded cell."
 Twisted up and dented down,
 Shrunken brim and swollen crown,
 Made of felt and silk and velvet, and
 the fur of dogs and cats,
 Oh, the hats, hats, hats, hats,
 Oh, the kinky little, dinky little hats!
 —Mina Irving, in "New York Sun."

An amusing little episode has leaked out from the rehearsals of Richard Strauss's new opera "Ariadne auf Naxos," at Stuttgart. At one place in the score a violinist, bending low over his instrument, whispered to his neighbour, "Don't you!" Strauss caught the sotto voce remark from his position at the conductor's desk, and retorted, "Quite right! But don't you agree with me that this passage is quite good enough to be used again?"—"Observer."

There's a hush in the desolate dwelling;
 The mother on tiptoe steals round,
 And the heart in her bosom is swelling—
 She longs for the discord of sound!
 Oh, she longs for the whoop and the
 laughter—
 The house is as still as a pool;
 For the rooms are so desolate after
 The children go back to school.

There are tears in the eyes of the mother;
 She thinks of the petulant word—
 Of the anger she tried hard to smother—
 The depths of her conscience are stirred,
 There are phantoms that rump though
 the dwelling
 With hands that are clinging and cool,
 And the heart of the lone one is swelling—
 The children have gone back to school.
 —"Cleveland Plain Dealer."

Druggists are demanding that physicians' prescriptions be written legibly. What! Take the romance and mystery out of medicine?—"Chicago News."

Why is it that Mr. Lloyd George, alone of our present Ministers, has impressed upon our minds the name of the village where his boyhood was passed? It does

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