

Arthur H. Adams as a man worthy of our deepest attention, and claim for him a right to be heard as the most promising of all New Zealand poets.

“A MAORI MAID,” by H. B. Vogel—Macmillan’s Colonial Library—is a novel that should appeal strongly to the colonial public by its fresh and vivid description of back-country life and scenes. It has much genuine human interest, too, and though there is some attempt at a treatment of the sex problem, the moral of the tale is distinctly healthy. The plot has tragic possibilities that the author has by no means neglected, and the characters, notably that of the heroine, and of her foster father, are conceived with considerable artistic power. The book abounds in romantic incident, and in one or two scenes is almost idyllic. There is a certain conscious attempt at smart writing in the more philosophical parts, but it is not too obtrusive, and one is left with a pleasurable expectation of Mr. Vogel’s next novel. Judging, however, from some of the criticisms passed upon “My Dear Sir! A Tale of a Duchess, a Marquis, and a Mere Tutor,” his second long work will disappoint readers of “A Maori Maid.” Mr. Vogel has deserted our fertile romantic pastures; he has chosen, presumably, to enter into competition with the romantico-historical novelists of the day, and has produced, according to *The Athenæum*, a harmless and common-place love story, crowded with titled persons, and with little that is striking in thought.

“CROSS TRAILS,” by Victor Waite—Methuen and Co.—is another attempt at a representation of New Zealand life. Considerably more than half of the action is laid in the northern part of the North Island. There is almost a total absence of constructive power, the plot being of the thinnest kind, and meandering woefully through the two books. There are some good points made in characterisation; the reader is interested in the hero, a weak-kneed drunkard, with the suspicion of murder hanging over him, almost throughout the story, and in the delineation of the traits of the half-caste girl who helps to ruin him. But one can less grudgingly praise the scattered pictures of bush, and farm, and township life. The Argentine part of the novel paints customs and characters so foreign to those with which we are acquainted, that it cannot but have a keen interest for us; and if there is the same fidelity and naturalness that there is in the scenes from New Zealand life, it must be accepted as a reliable transcript of the habits and characteristic thoughts of the Argentine plainmen.

WE note that *The Bulletin Newspaper Co., Ltd.*, which has already done such good work in the publication of Australian literature, promises “A Rose of Regret,” by James Hebblethwaite, the nature-loving Tasmanian poet, whose genuinely inspired work has found so much favour of late from Australian admirers of true poetry.

