



By "THE SAGE."

"The Hole in the Wall" is the title of a new book by Arthur Morrison, published by Methuen and Co., and forwarded for review by Messrs Wildman, Lyell and Arey. In several of his former works this author has proved to us how well he knows his London, and at a time when so many of the old landmarks are being swept away, it is a special pleasure to read a book the scene of which is laid amongst them. The greater part of the book is taken up with little Stephen's tale, and the two opening sentences give the reader a good idea what to expect. "My grandfather was a publican—and a sinner, as you will see. His public-house was the Hole in the Wall, on the river's edge at Wapping; and his sins—all of them that I know of—are recorded in these pages." Stephen was a small boy whose mother had died while his father was away at sea, and Grandfather Nat took him to reside with him. Much happens at the Hole in the Wall and in the neighbourhood, which Stephen finds hard to understand, but his childish impressions of what he sees and hears and his comments thereon are charmingly given. His grandfather does a good business in a very undemonstrative way by purchasing smuggled tobacco, or watches and other trifles from the crowd who

live on Jack ashore, and think nothing of knocking him on the head, and chucking him in the river if he is likely to prove too troublesome a customer. A pair of scoundrels, partners in the shipping firm, "Viney and Marr," are described. Their vessels are "pawned up to the royals." Marr absconds with all the cash he can lay hands on, some eight hundred odd pounds, gets murdered, and flung into the river, another murder follows at the door of the Hole in the Wall. Little Stephen picks up a pocket-book with the eight hundred pounds in it which the second murderer has dropped. His grandfather declares it is his, and puts it by to start him in life. The news that Stephen's father has been drowned by the "piling up" of one of the heavily-mortgaged vessels, gives little Stephen a stronger claim to it, the old man considers. The rest of the book is taken up with a number of plots by Viney and other villains of a pronounced type, to secure this money for themselves. The book is admirably written, and goes to prove in a graphic manner that for poor Jack the dangers of the deep were at one time, at least, eclipsed by those he had to encounter ashore.

"Felix," by Robert Hichens, another addition to Methuen's Colo-