

nice refined sympathy for him. And when he swam the moat a second time, he carried a bundle of dry clothes on his head, that he might impersonate the King in a suit of crushed, but not wet, tweeds. On page 127 of the sequel, again, we read that "Simon shot an apprehensive glance at Colonel Sapt." This is a kind of war news which one can read without undue perturbation. So long as in the reading it has a glamour of reality, it is high art. Assuredly Mr. Hope does not, as an advertiser wrote, adopt "the old device of giving his hero some bad qualities to make him human." No, he invests him with all the virtues. Dumas's heroes sometimes swaggered and bragged. Mr. Hope's are absolutely beyond criticism. His men are gentlemen, his women are ladies. Their language and manners are invariably polite. "Slept well?" someone asked. "Not a wink," answered Rudolf "cheerfully."

Another quality which contributes to the summery attractiveness of Mr. Hope's books (apart from the buckram covers of many of them) is their atmosphere of coquetry. Of course, Phroso and the Princess Osra are profound flirts, but they flirt not only with their surroundings but with the reader; and so, by word, look or deed, does nearly every other of Mr. Hope's creations. Scarcely had her lover greeted Flavia with a becoming exuberance of affection when dear old Sapt remarked mechanically, "Now to business!" whereat Rudolf, we are informed, "laughed a little." We know that laugh, and join in it. It means that the author loves the descent from the sublime to the ridiculous, and when his characters become tense or oversentimental, he takes pains to suggest in the kindest and least satirical way that these moods, too, have a funny aspect. There is nothing highstrung about Anthony Hope—no glittering eye or skinny hand to hold the wedding-guest. He does not command one to listen, but in a chatty, clubable way, seems to draw up his chair and, between meditative whiffs from his pipe, to spin a yarn which he enjoys as blandly as do his auditors. If he tried to be impressive, or wore the cloak of intense earnestness, or lacked that touch of demure self-consciousness which gives a personal content to his most refined conversational amenities, he

would not be Anthony Hope; nor would his stories have the winsomeness, and more than the abidingness, of summer friends. In the matter of coquetry, perhaps *The Dolly Dialogues* are best. Certainly they are the most elliptical, containing silences which are nearly as eloquent as the curve of Dolly's wrist; even Lady Mickleham looked pensively into the bottom of her teacup.

All things considered, however, one likes Mr. Hope better in Strelsau than in London, even the London of Charles II. That is why we ought to think it a little unfair for the present volumes to be illustrated by Mr. Gibson. The latter's summer girls with the wavy hair and smart shirtwaists, and that tall, smooth-faced young man who is supposed to resemble Richard Harding Davis, accord illsomely with the quaint mediæval architecture of Ruritania. Without drawing a line that can be called untrue, Mr. Gibson has curiously transformed the situations and characters of the text. I cannot but feel that Mr. H. B. Wechsler or Mr. H. C. Edwards, despite the fact that the latter made nearly all of the Princess Osra's lovers look like Sir Andrew Aguecheek, were much better suited to their tasks. Albeit I hesitate long and abjectly to express such an opinion when I think of the host of American girls who want themselves, and Mr. Davis, and Mr. Hope, and London and New York and Strelsau, all crowded into a single volume.

*George Merriam Hyde.*

#### A LOVE STORY BY MRS. HUMPHRY WARD.\*

A story by the author of *Robert Elsmere* which is first and foremost a love-story; a novel in which through two fascinating volumes, the interest centres about the two familiar figures, the man and the woman, and the one problem to be solved is the age-long question, "Will they two overcome the obstacles which separate them, marry and be happy forever after?" —this is something before which the reverent critic must simply bare his head and be grateful. That the separating obstacles should be of a psychologic and theologic character, is simply to repeat

\*Helbeck of Bannisdale. New York: The Macmillan Co. 2 vols., cloth, \$2.00.

that Mrs. Ward is the author; we can but paint as we see, and to her human nature is primarily religious; as she herself says, in the story under consideration, "So long as pain and death remain, humanity will always be at heart a mystic."

The chapter in which these words occur, while full of interest to the student, is the only one in the book in which the story as such makes no progress; the only one which will probably be voted by the general reader a trifle slow; it consists chiefly of a monologue by Dr. Friedland, a personage who has so little to do with the rest of the story, that we are entitled to assume that his "value" is that of the setter-forth of the moral of the tale, and of Mrs. Ward's own personal feeling and opinions. It may perhaps be judicious to consider these first; especially as it gives us at once an insight into all that the book has of plot.

"Fountain," an agnostic and the heroine's father, "took Laura out of her generation and gave her nothing in return. Did he read with her, share his mind with her? Never! He was indolent, she was wilful; so the thing slid. But all the time he made a partisan of her; he expected her to echo his hates and prejudices—he stamped himself and his cause deep into her affections—and then . . . she must needs fall in love with this man, this Catholic. Catholicism at its best—worse luck!"

What happens? Why of course the girl's imagination goes over! Her father in her, her temperament, stand in the way of anything more. But where is she to look for self-respect, for peace of mind? She feels herself an infidel, a moral outcast. She trembles before the claims of this great visible system. Her reason refuses them—but why? She cannot tell. For Heaven's sake, why do we leave our children's minds empty like this? If you believe, my good friend, Educate! And if you doubt, still more, Educate, Educate."

Beyond what is here sketched the story has nothing that can be called a plot; its circumstances are wholly and entirely the result of the working out of character. In which place it is in point to notice the remarkable advance in characterisation made by the author since the publication of her last novel. Laura is not only drawn with all that firmness of touch and keen insight which made Letty Tressady a joy to the critical mind, but she is distinctly alive, which Letty was not, if we except the single moment, when, with the dawning mother-consciousness in her own heart, she tried on Worth's latest creation to please the

dying mother-in-law, whom until then she had so severely detested. Laura, from first to last, stands out before us with the vividness wherewith her own golden hair smote upon the eyes of Helbeck of Bannisdale. And Alan Helbeck himself seizes at once upon the heart as well as the imagination, with such force that we are prepared to join issue with his creator as to whether his eyes were blue or grey. On page 88 she calls them "pale blue;" elsewhere they are dark grey. Blue they were, as a matter of course; not pale, however, but light blue, with a ring, darker in colour, around the edge of the iris. Eyes of this description, when set, as were Helbeck's, in a dark-skinned face, under black brows and lashes, and accompanied with grizzled hair, and thin, high features, have a singularly intensity; unquestionably the alteration in colour is the fault—shall we say, of the compositor?

In the setting of the Westmoreland hill-country, and in the seclusion of Bannisdale Park, the story tells itself with a simplicity, spontaneity and directness which almost obscure the depth of its psychological insight, its sympathetic impartiality, and its marvellous technical accuracy of detail. Compared for example with the luridness of Mr. Hall Caine's *The Christian* (there are only two occasions in the life of a reviewer when he should use the adjective lurid; one is in describing the work of Hall Caine, and the other, that of Marie Corelli), how restful to the jaded journalistic mind to perceive that as to Catholic tradition and custom, as to books of devotion, and the "Rule" observed by the tertiaries of St. Francis, Mrs. Ward really knows what she is talking about. Even the feast day, otherwise unnamed, occurring within the Lenten fast, when Helbeck actually ate flesh and drank wine, was we are able to say, probably the Feast of the Annunciation; yet these things might be "gotten up" by any careful writer. Mrs. Ward's transcendent merit is that she gives us Helbeck's feeling for his religion, and that of Laura for her inherited agnosticism, without a single word which a partisan of either side could justly resent as unfair or even overstrained. We say "justly resent," having in view the *odium theologicum* of each—alas! the last weakness of noble minds.

The book is more than a novel; it might very properly be called "A Study in Subjectivity;" it is a sermon on the necessity of cultivating the objective faculties, the reason, judgment, etc., as a check and guide to the affections and the imagination. It is hardly too much to say, that with the single exception of the accident in the steel works (told with a vivid swiftness which leaves the reader absolutely breathless), there is not a single sorrow or difficulty distressing any of the characters, that would not have been prevented or removed by training. But this,—"Training,—Obedience," are said to constitute the secret of the Jesuit. Undoubtedly; for what they mean is the moulding of the subjective self according to a fixed pattern, while modern thought—Protestantism, or what you will—recognises the right of the individual to develop according to a separate and individual pattern. Generations who have lived and died for this right, leave it to their children, not as a right, but as a necessity. This was the fundamental issue between Helbeck and Laura; the one, trained, obedient, and saintly after the Jesuit model; the other a mere wild pagan; it is the revelation by her lover of his deepest self that breaks the tie between them; when Love proves stronger than this inherited Necessity, the true self finds refuge in self-destruction. The catastrophe is not arbitrary or sensational; but from the earliest pages of the tale is inevitable.

But what of the mere "thrill" of the story; the quality which alone attracts the general reader?

The ancient house of Bannisdale Park, whose antique furniture had been sold for the benefit of Catholic orphanages; the Westmoreland scenery, painted with a lavishness of colour, an irrepressible affectionateness which the author rarely permits herself; the peasantry, the rural gaieties, the variety and the fidelity of the characterisation,—these make it a book for which to be grateful. And perhaps femininity may be allowed to be grateful on another account, not only to Mrs. Ward, but to modern thought. Yet how many women readers will understand why the passage quoted from the life of St. Charles Borromeo should so have offended Laura? Why her cheeks

burned, and she flung down the volume of Alban Butler? Why she was "that evening, more difficult and exacting than ever with the man who loved her, and could yet feed his mind on the virtues of" that particular saint?

*Helbeck of Bannisdale* is Mrs. Ward's *Meisterwerke*; a book to silence cavillers, and to admit the author into the highest rank of novelists; it is a book to be read at least twice, once for its "thrill" and then for what we have called it, "A Study in Subjectivity;" but its final and crowning merit is that the ordinary reader will certainly pronounce that so far as he can discover there is no such thing as subjectivity in it, but that all the people only act "just so."

Katharine Pearson Woods.

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#### LOVE IN THE GHETTO.\*

In the crowded panorama of the Ghetto, one figure stands out in picturesque relief. It is a sleek, prosperous old man, shambling in gait, oily in speech and calmly complacent in demeanour. The proverbial shrug is his and the patronising manner too. And yet he wields a more powerful influence over the destinies of his orthodox brethren than all the rabbis of the church. He carries in his long tailed coat the key to marital happiness; he hawks human hearts with religious grace and with the sanction of the Most High. This ungainly old man over whose temples the black curls of deep piety hang in thick profusion is the *Shadchan*, the professional match-maker of the Ghetto. His domain is the sisterhood of Israel and his mission, the congenial union of his fellow creatures. Mr. Cahan deeply appreciates the virtues of the *Shadchan* and combines with his understanding a sympathetic notion of the quaint humour of this son of the Ghetto.

When the apparent disintegration of Jewish life was at hand in the twelfth century, when the altar of Hebraic sacredness, the home, was trembling, the *Shadchan* came to the rescue of his unhappy people and with a remarkable disregard for time and distance, age and beauty, united the wandering and the

\*The Imported Bridegroom and Other Stories. By Abraham Cahan. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. \$1.00.