RECENT BOOKS IN BRIEF REVIEW

THOSE who wish to maintain residence on this planet should learn by heart the facts presented by Will Irwin in "The Next War" (Dutton) and should never weary in stating them to those who will or who will not listen. Others had better emigrate to Mars or some such peaceful place straightway, because the "next war", when it occurs, will be one practically of extermination. For Mr. Irwin's facts are true—quite true. No one is more at home with his facts than he. Logically, relentlessly, entirely without sentiment or moralizing, he presents that picture until you are ready to agree that the next war really wouldn't pay. It will begin, not where the world war left off, but with the addition of intervening years crammed with intensive research in the business of killing. Mr. Irwin considers the subject of war in general from an economic standpoint, its effect on the race and on its participants, and proves that it has no possible value. His is a powerful book because it crushes every militaristic argument and finally, in spite of those who say that war cannot be eradicated, proposes a practical way to eliminate it.

Hopalong Cassidy and his two confrères shoot accurately; all Mexicans are bad, and virtue always triumphs. "The Bar-20 Three" (McClurg) in these respects is a typical wild west story. But the marriageable heroes having found their mates in earlier books of the series, a love plot is missing. By this and by a palpably western dialogue the book is better than the average of the species. Despite the inevitableness of its triumphal ending Clarence E. Mulford's tale is always interesting.

The third volume of "Little Theater Classics" edited by Samuel A. Eliot, Jr. (Little, Brown) contains four plays, all adaptations from well-known classics of the stage. The first, "Bushido", is merely an episode lifted from a great feudal drama by the Japanese playwright, Takeda. It is tragically dramatic and has been acted with success by the Washington Square Players. The second is a fairy tale from Peele's "Old Wife's Tale", while the third is made up from parts of Shakespeare's "Pericles". The last, "The Duchess of Pavy", is an adaptation from Ford's "Love's Sacrifice". All of them have been tested by amateur performers and found adequate to their rather special requirements. There are full stage directions and explanations.

In "Kaleema", Marion McClelland's first novel (Century), the author deals with a section of life which is always colorful and interesting to the mass of people fated to follow the drab occupations of butcher, baker, doctor, undertaker. Kaleema (who is the heroine, and not a patent medicine or a river in Darkest Africa) is the star of a cheap theatrical company playing "one night stands" in the blizzardy towns of North Dakota. The author knows the life she is portraying, and paints it as she has found it: the soot and slowness of local trains; the discomfort and chill of the small-town hotels; the tarnished tinsel of the the-

atrical life; the expiring Camille getting into her shabby street clothes and haggling about her overdue salary with the harassed manager. Nor has she neglected to complete the picture. For she has sketched in the humor and the innate kindliness of the "just folks" beneath the tawdry finery.

During the recent critical years of our national history, few Americans in public life have been subjected to more vigorous verbal assaults than Henry Cabot Lodge. That the venerable senator has not hesitated to return the blows is matter of common knowledge. In view of this wordy battle, his essay "The Senate of the United States"—the first in the volume of that title (Scribner)—is piquantly interesting. Illuminating is Mr. Lodge's clean-cut review of the Senate's origin and rights. Jealous of its prerogatives, he clarifies many things, notably the League of Nations issue between Mr. Wilson and the upper legislative body.

The other outstanding features of the collection are Senator Lodge's splendid tribute to Theodore Roosevelt delivered before Congress on the occasion of the death of the ex-president and the Pilgrim Tercentenary address given at Plymouth last year. The purely literary essays are in Mr. Lodge's customary graceful style. They constitute the plea of an ardent champion of the classics for true culture and breadth of vision as opposed to mere utilitarian knowledge.

Carolyn Wells makes excellent use of spiritism and the ouija board in creating an atmosphere of tense mystery, yet she does not allow her story to leave, even for a moment, the realm of things explicable by the most mortal of us. "The Come Back" (Doran) is the story of a man who disappears in the Labrador wilds. In his youth a gypsy fortune teller had prophesied that he would some day go on a long journey and die a terrible death but would, in due course of time, return to his family. Of course, just as soon as you perceive that one of the first chapters is headed "The Prophecy", you know that the remaining chapters will be devoted to the fulfilment of that prophecy. But the explanation of that fulfilment will keep you guessing all the way through. Miss Wells is famous for her skilful manipulation of the mystery story and she certainly lives up to her reputation in "The Come Back".

Have you ever tried to wash a billy-goat with lye soap in a brook; or set a trap for crows in the corn; or gotten "turned around" half a mile from home, when it seemed in the middle of the forest? These are things that have not changed since Abraham Lincoln was a boy in Hodgensville one hundred years ago. "The Boyhood of Abraham Lincoln" (Bobbs-Merrill), the story of Lincoln's early life in Larue county, was handed down by word of mouth from Lincoln's onetime playfellow, Austin Gollaher, to J. Rogers Gore, then (twenty-five years ago) a reporter on the Larue County "Herald", and by him preserved until the present day. Told in the matter-of-fact words of the old man, with direct conversation and with photographs, it nevertheless reads like a fairy tale in its remoteness from daily life in New York. Precious, new-discovered bits of information abound. As a text for historical research the Gollaher-Gore manuscript would perhaps be of doubtful value; as a treasury of knowledge about the silent years between Lincoln's birth and his

appearance in the Springfield law office, its importance is profound, and the enchantment of it lingers.

"The Kingdom Round the Corner" by Coningsby Dawson (Cosmopolitan) is really not so bad as the publisher's notices would lead you to expect, though it is concerned with a search for happiness which you fear must inevitably arrive. The author evidences considerable restraint and insight and accomplishes some bits of great charm until he muddles things at the end. There is no moral law to prevent an author's marrying three heroines to three worthy men. Contrariwise. But it makes the cheery note of the bluebird sound somewhat shrill.

Viola C. White's first volume of poems, "Horizons" (Yale), has in it something which many first volumes lack: thoughtful work boldly done, lacking finish at times, but strong enough to assure the reader that Miss White is a poet—no mere dabbler in verse forms. She has learned much from the Greeks, and from Keats, Blake, and Browning, who have taught her a certain daring and the ability to use fine phrases in memorable ways; but she has her own originality, and her own philosophical flavor. She is not a poet of passing moods and emotions, and her success lies not in lyrics but rather in the longer and more reflective poems that give space for her thoughts and the opportunity to use her excellent descriptive phrases. Her work suggests that she has much to say, and that it will become clearer and more focused as her style develops. In this book she makes a worthy and pleasing beginning.

A New York millionaire's pursuit of an historic diamond necklace, the love affair of a Red Cross nurse who was thirsting for adventure, and the experiment in piracy of a handsome art dealer who wanted to hunt pearls, are matters which Harold MacGrath juggles with practised skill in "The Pagan Madonna" (Doubleday, Page). The story is frankly intended for those readers who love the romantic lure of south seas, Spanish galleons, and the ends of rainbows. Fate, the Blind Madonna of the Pagan, aids the author in assembling his characters on the millionaire's yacht anchored off the coast of China. Perhaps the diamond necklace is there, also. Only time will tell. With the Byronic art dealer in charge of the "planted" crew, the owner of the yacht, his estranged son, and the nurse as prisoners, the craft sails forth into the oily calm of tropic seas, and romance and mystery walk the deck under the low-hung stars.

A pike does not sound like an alluring heroine for a book. But in "Grim: The Story of a Pike", translated from the Danish of Svend Fleuron by Jessie Muir and W. Emmé (Knopf), we find a great deal of personality and individuality in that cold-blooded lady fish. This simple yet dramatic tale of her life makes us smile over her vices and rejoice over her victories and her clever escapes. "Her scales gleamed with the rays of the sun and moon; and when, with the rapidity of lightning, she made a dart, it seemed like the twinkling of stars in the dark night of the deep waters." To be sure, "many a happy bridegroom had slipped down her throat"; but does anyone quite frown on Cleopatra? Dorothy P. Lathrop has drawn excellent illustrations for a book far out of the ordinary.