

of existing characteristics and conditions. By this method he leads his readers to an unusually clear understanding of the antecedents of those immigrants whose national and racial names so often mean little or nothing to the average American. The book will do much toward creating a just estimate of the native worth of these peoples, and is all the more welcome because so large a proportion of our present immigration comes from the section of Europe of which the author speaks.

Royal Family Skeletons

Peeps into family skeleton cupboards have a charm for us all, deny it if we dare, and that same curiosity which gave Bluebeard excuse for his matrimonial adventures is still alive. Behold then in *My Past* (Putnam, \$3.50) a repository of strange secrets. The authoress, Countess Marie Larisch, was the favorite niece and confidante of the Empress Elizabeth of Austria, and her frank statement of many details of the tragedies which pursue the house of Austria seem to bear the stamp of veracity.

It is principally as a vindication of her innocent connection with the suicide of the Crown Prince Rudolph of Austria that this volume sees the light. Tho at first sight a love tragedy, the final act of his liaison with the Baroness Mary Vetsera, it is plainly stated here that the prince was conspiring against his father, Francis-Joseph, and an attempt to seize the throne of Hungary was contemplated. Hereditary forces, that taint of degeneracy and madness which has cursed the Hapsburgs, contributed to this suicide, which was officially explained as an accidental shooting.

Many interesting details of the life of Elizabeth and her love affairs, of the Emperor, of members of the family and its entourage, are given without reserve, and new light cast upon many things long a mystery in international circles. The writer has, in her griefs, paid over and over again for the follies she confesses here.

The Ordeal

The Ordeal, by Charles Egbert Craddock, is lacking in none of the charm which characterizes the novelist's style. The scenes are laid chiefly in the Tennessee mountains and more particularly around a bungalow used as a summer home by the main characters. The action centers in the kidnapping of a child by some moonshiners. Aside from the dramatic quality of the book, the descriptions are some of the best that have come from Craddock's facile pen.

The Laboring Class and Its Budget

National budgets are very important and at times even very interesting, but it is doubtful if they have half the significance of individual budgets. Nothing, therefore, can be of greater interest to anyone wishing to find out how the mass of the "working class" lives than such figures as those in Maurice Halbwach's study of *La Classe Ouvrière et les Niveaux de Vie* (Paris: F. Alcan). This book is based chiefly upon the official reports of Germany; it deals with the distribution of the family income among the various forms of expenditure: lodging, rent, food, etc.; the relative amounts of the different kinds of food eaten; the effect of the size of the family and the size of the family income as related to this distribution. There is also an elaborate general discussion as to the nature of the proletariat and its place in modern society.

Our Immigrants at Home

Rev. Francis E. Clark has written a most interesting and instructive volume about the territories and peoples which make up the heterogeneous mass known as the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. The descriptions of country and city life, bits of characteristic history and story, anecdotes of travel, and the necessary infusions of geographical and linguistic knowledge, help the reader in a pleasing way to untangle the complex racial, governmental and social systems which prevail in those *Old Homes of New Americans* (Houghton, \$1.50). Dr. Clark rightly begins with some account of the present situation and runs back into the history of racial and political change for the explanation and valuation

The Story of the Borgias

Within the last few years a number of biographers have illuminated for us those fascinating days of the greatness of Florence when, during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, her art came into its flower, Cellini carved his matchless marbles, Fra Angelico painted his altar pieces on his reverent knees, Beatrice d'Este and Isabella d'Este held sway, Lorenzo the Magnificent built his palaces and his and the Borgia family waxed powerful. The Borgia family especially has fascinated all who have been interested in Florentine history. One generation of historians painted them as monstrously infamous, but now the pendulum swings back. Today even the crafty Lucrezia is painted as a lovely woman, innocent of guile. The present writer, John Fyvie, is a scholarly Englishman who has delved deeply into both sides of the story and has produced pleasantly written accounts of the lives of Rodrigo, Cesare and Lucrezia Borgia, which are well balanced and at the same time present a vivid picture of times most picturesque. (*The Story of the Borgias*. Putnam. \$4.50.)