

STORIES

Edward P. Dole, the author of *The Stand By* [Century Co. \$1.25], is assistant attorney general of Hawaii. His book is one of the comparatively few successful examples of preaching through a story. It is a spirited and engrossing novel and at the same time a plea and an argument for prohibition. In fact, it is the strongest presentation of the prohibitory cause which we remember to have seen. The enemy is given every advantage by the author and then it is shown how he can be overcome. The hero of the story, of course, is the central figure in the prohibition fight, and the grim determination with which in such a

contest the liquor interest would probably meet its enemy is portrayed in these pages with a distinctness not often equaled. The plot is admirably handled. It is well proportioned and so shaped that interest increases to the end and the love story, although never lost to sight and never falling to enchain attention, after all is secondary to the moral purpose of the book. If prohibition ever is to be made a success it must be essentially along the lines suggested in this volume, and total abstinence workers ought to derive not only inspiration, but practical information of solid and lasting value from Mr. Dole's story.

The Landlord of Lion's Head [Harper & Bros. \$1.75], Mr. W. D. Howells's story, has been coming out as a serial. We have so genuine an admiration for Mr. Howells that it is always painful not to be able to give his stories high praise. In some respects they are such examples of conscientious work that they appeal to one strongly. But, to tell the truth, this is a fine-spun and tedious tale. We have found the utmost difficulty in compelling ourselves to read it through. The heroine is sweet and noble, far above the average in the author's works. We do not ask to read always of heroes and heroines in the high sense, but the commonplace lives and passions of the others are treated with such wearisome minuteness, and the pettiness and insipidity of life is often thrust upon us so fatiguingly, that we, at least, have grown unutterably weary.

The Great K. and A. Robbery [Dodd, Mead & Co. \$1.25], by P. L. Ford, describes in his bright and entertaining fashion a "hold-up" of a train on a Western railroad, which was only a sham hold-up, yet furnished an opportunity for some lively detective work and some personal tribulations, but out of the distress and anxiety of which the fruition of the hero's best hopes came. The narrative entertains from beginning to end and therein answers its evident purpose.

It is a long time since we have read a book so thoroughly cynical and so boldly low in moral tone, and withal so grisly in its pictures of grotesque and desperate adventures, as *The Sign of the Spider* [Dodd, Mead & Co. \$1.25], by Bertram Mitford. The hero is absolutely selfish to begin with, and he grows more so. He deliberately abandons all allegiance to moral convictions, and his example and influence, as well as his sentiments, are those of a knave. Bold, reckless, yet with some noble qualities, there is no sufficient excuse for him, and we cannot recommend the book. Moreover, some of the melodramatic and almost infernal experiences through which he is described as passing are too improbable to even seem possible. The book is written with ability, but it is ability misused.

The Master-Beggars [J. B. Lippincott Co. \$1.50], by L. Cope Cornford, is a historical novel relating to the time of the struggle between the Dutch and the Duke of Alva. It is a very able story, presenting a graphic picture of the wild, undisciplined recklessness, infused nevertheless with sturdy patriotism, of the famous Gueux, or "Beggars," and of the stern, relentless cruelty of the Spaniards. The narrative is full of dramatic incident, and a pleasant romance is interwoven with its plot. It is written with spirit and considerable historical sense, and is a good example of a certain useful type of novel-writing.—*Notice* [J. B. Lippin-

cott Co. \$1.25], by the late Mrs. Hungerford, "The Duchess," is another English story, the actors being country gentry and their families. Whether intentionally or not, it points out vividly the misery which came from the love of a bright, warm-hearted young girl for an unworthy man. It is very interesting, though decidedly sad. —*Into an Unknown World* [J. B. Lippincott Co. \$1.50], a new book by John Strange Winter, is based upon the fact of the caste spirit which still exists in English society, although lately much modified. It describes the marriage of the heroine, who is of high family, to a young man socially far below her, and the trials which befell her, due to the utter difference in her new social surroundings from those to which she had been accustomed. She is a winsome character, and the story turns out agreeably.