

Comment on Current Books

*Another Book on
Herbert Spencer* The brief biography of
Herbert Spencer which
Professor J. Arthur

Thomson has written for the "English Men of Science" series is useful for two reasons: it presents a concise but luminous account of the human side of the great philosopher, and it gives the reader an idea of the position of the scientific world to-day in regard to the views which Spencer formulated or championed. The biographical portion proper consumes a comparatively small space—fewer than one hundred pages—the remainder of the volume being occupied with exposition and discussion of Spencer's work, with especial reference to his "Principles of Biology" and his attitude to the evolution-idea generally. Professor Thomson, it is clear, is not to be rated among Spencer's most enthusiastic admirers; but neither is he a carping critic, and, independent as are his views, it will be found that he is appreciative of the labors of the famous pioneer, and is usually fair-minded in his comment. It must be said, however, that the value of his book, and particularly of the expository chapters, would have been increased had he borne more steadily in mind the fact that the series to which he contributes is primarily intended for non-technical readers. Some

of his passages are difficult reading indeed. (Herbert Spencer. By J. Arthur Thomson, M.A. E. P. Dutton & Co., New York. \$1, net.)

*The
Anglo-Saxon* The *motif* of this volume is more unimpeachable than its method. Its aim is "to bring all the English-speaking peoples together by enabling them to realize their own characteristics." The author's qualifications are an English birth, long residence in Australia, and two years' sojourn in America, with an observant and reflective mind. His observations are comprehensive and interesting, but rather cursory and superficial. In philosophizing upon them he is plainly amateurish; *e. g.*, the superior military prowess of the Arabs under the banner of Islam is taken to indicate them as a younger race than the vanquished Greeks. He seems to have caught a hint from Lord Salisbury's biting reference to the Latin nations as decadent. "Anglo-Saxon" and "Latin" are used more as psychical than as physiological terms; *e. g.*, George III.'s government was "Latin," but "Washington was an advanced Anglo-Saxon," and the deterioration alleged in this country is "a revival of the Latin spirit." Belonging, though not technically, to the class of "light literature," the book is more

profitable reading than much that is chosen for a vacant hour. (The Anglo-Saxon. By George E. Boxall. The A. Wessels Company, New York. \$1.25.)

Bembo In this Italian romance of the fifteenth century an innocent boy, inspired by love of the Christ, goes out from his sheltered home among good monks to carry a cure to the evil world. The little Parablist of San Zeno sings his way, sometimes moving hard hearts to repentance, but often suffering from evil men and women. The picture of Italian court life, of wicked intrigue, falsehood, and cruelty, is vivid, and the atmosphere of the time is skillfully reproduced. (Bembo: A Tale of Italy. By Bernard Capes. E. P. Dutton & Co., New York. \$1.50.)

The Continental Outcast How the unemployed of every sort, able-bodied or infirm, honest or criminal, men in search of work or vagrants and beggars, are treated in Continental Europe is the subject of this instructive volume. It is the record of a tour of observation by an English committee interested in the Church Army Labor Homes and in the improvement of the English Poor Law, from which our own was derived. In Belgium, Holland, Germany, and especially in Denmark, the problem of the unemployed is treated in a way from which we, as well as Englishmen, have very much to learn. Yet it is no new idea, at least to our charity workers, that organized charity bleeds for lack of a properly organized correction of vagabonds, drunkards, and wastrels. There is an open field for evangelists to preach the severe side of the gospel of self-help. What is immediately needed is a strong nucleus for the public sentiment which is quite ready to crystallize about it. Railway companies, the chief sufferers from the tramp nuisance, might earn the gratitude of the community by leading in an effort for the legislative organization of a general corrective movement on the lines described in this enlightening book. (The Continental Outcast. By Rev. Wilson Carlile and Victor W. Carlile. The A. Wessels Company, New York. 60c., net.)

Elementary Pedagogy It should not be suspected from this title that here is a technical work, dry and dull. Quite the contrary. Dr. Seeley writes for young teachers what every parent may read with profit. He has beginners in mind, but what he tells them is not unserviceable for veterans. Long experience and wide reading have brought to his hand abundant instances and illustrations of principles and their applica-

tion. It is a well-digested manual of practical wisdom, well assorted and packed. As to religious education, the ground is taken toward which a recent veering of opinion is observable—that while Church and State are separate, Religion and the State are not separate; that the truths of God's sovereignty, justice, and providence, being vital to the welfare of the State, should be inculcated in the schools. This seems hardly controvertible in a Nation which stamps its coinage with the most widely circulated creed in the world, "In God We Trust." The mental muddle which confuses religion with the Church on one hand and with theology on the other is responsible for slowness to acknowledge it. (Elementary Pedagogy. By Levi Seeley, Ph.D. Hinds, Noble & Eldredge, New York. \$1.25, net.)

Everyman's Library A very large group of books, either of classical quality or of established popularity, are being reprinted in uniform edition for the purpose of bringing the best work of representative authors in an attractive form, in moderate compass, and within the reach of people of moderate means. "Everyman's Library," edited by Mr. Ernest Rhys, proposes to give at a very small cost "all that has worn well in English literature." It will offer, not only the best authors of the past, but also comparatively new authors; and will place books of pure amusement and pleasure side by side with books of wisdom and knowledge. The volumes are clearly printed in type of good size, and are tastefully bound in cloth, with full gilt back. The margins are narrow, but the title-pages are artistic. "Everyman's Library" certainly offers a great deal at a very small expense. Eighty volumes have been sent out, and several hundred more are to follow. This is a movement in the right direction; a sound attempt to popularize literature, not by getting cheaper writing, but by making cheaper books. (Everyman's Library. Edited by Ernest Rhys. E. P. Dutton & Co., New York. Per volume, cloth, 50c.; leather, \$1, postpaid.)

A History of English Prosody There is room for a complete historical study of English prosody, undertaken, like Professor Saintsbury's, with the most loyal admission of facts. The battle of Accent vs. Quantity plays little part in his story, though he believes in the foot or group system rather than in the accent theory. Dr. Saintsbury finds English prosody neither a mere modification of the Anglo Saxon, nor "an apostasy to 'the rhythm of the foreigner,'" but rather a blending of the same ele-

ments that went to the making of the English nation and the English language. Between the years 1000 and 1200 he finds a great gulf fixed, but, thanks to its birthright, the prosody of English is not a fixed syllabic prosody. The task of the ballad was to preserve this native prosodic liberty. The volume carries the story through the work of Spenser, out of the rudiments of English prosody. Its arrangement of chapters for the study of texts and of inter-chapters and appendices for summaries and discussions is helpful. Freshness of style and illustration makes it much more delightful than most technical works. (*A History of English Prosody*. By George Saintsbury. Vol. I. From the Origins to Spenser. The Macmillan Company, New York. \$2.50.)

The Huguenots in America

There is a great deal to criticise in Lucian J. Fossdick's "The French Blood in America." For one thing, the title is wholly misleading. From it one would naturally infer that the book deals with the influence of all French strains in the development of the United States, but in fact it discusses simply the influence of a single element—the Huguenot. Again, far too much space is consumed in retelling the well-known history of the Huguenots prior to their advent in the New World, and this with an astonishing amount of sectarian bitterness. Further, when the subject proper is finally reached, extravagant claims are made, the reader being virtually asked to believe that the Republic is what it is to-day chiefly because of the infusion of Huguenot blood. And, lastly, while it is evident that Mr. Fossdick has expended a prodigious time in research, it is no less evident that he has been indiscriminating in his use of authorities. Of this there is no more striking instance than his account of the massacre of the Huguenots by Menendez in 1565, which is carelessly written and altogether from the French point of view. In fine, the defects of the book are so serious that we cannot recommend it either as an authoritative or interesting contribution to its subject, which is well deserving of close and exhaustive examination. It has, however, a certain suggestive value in indicating the pitfalls which future students will do well to avoid. (*The French Blood in America*. By Lucian J. Fossdick. Fleming H. Revell Company, New York. \$2, net.)

Il Santo

The books of no living Italian romancer better deserve reading than do those of Antonio Fogazzaro, not only because of their style but also because, pre-eminent among Roman Catholic

writers, he aims, first, to bring his Church into harmony with the accepted truths of modern science, and, secondly, to bring about some return to the simplicity and spirituality of Apostolic days. Best of all, the romancer's manner leaves his readers with an assurance that he believes in the ultimate victory of this double reform. The present volume accentuates these characteristics, so it seems to us, more than has any in the happily long list of the Fogazzaro novels. Those that have come nearest it have been the "Piccolo Mondo Antico" and the "Piccolo Mondo Moderno." "Il Santo" is really a continuation of "Piccolo Mondo Moderno." We again greet the same hero, Piero Maironi, now a "saint"—*il santo*—who, questioning, discontented, and vacillating in "Piccolo Mondo Moderno," becomes a monk of a rather mediæval but not unpleasant type. Perhaps Signor Fogazzaro did not dream how well his latest production might be advertised. Not only was it seized upon by such a broad-minded Roman Catholic editor as M. Brunetière, for instance, the editor of the "Revue des Deux Mondes," and others, for publication as a serial and translation, when necessary, in their papers; the Pope himself, in view of the frank criticisms in the book, open and implied, of present-day ecclesiastical and dogmatic shortcomings, was later induced by the Vatican conservatives to place "Il Santo" upon the Index Expurgatorius! In so doing Pius X. has doubled the fame and force of the Fogazzaro book, not only among Protestants and so-called "freethinkers," but, very probably, among those of any name who would influence a great communion toward true modernity and true loyalty to apostolic ideals. (*Il Santo*. Da Antonio Fogazzaro. Baldini, Castoldi & Co., Milan, Italy.)

An Indictment Against Portugal

To the unsolved problem presented by the conditions existing in the Congo Free State is now added another problem of like nature, if the statements contained in Mr. Henry W. Nevinson's "A Modern Slavery" are to be accepted at face value. Mr. Nevinson accuses Portugal of maintaining in its West African possessions of Angola, San Thomé, and Principe a system of slavery which differs from the old-time slavery in name only. He charges that under the fiction of "contract labor" natives dragged from the interior are compelled to work on plantations until released by death; that their servitude is marked by all forms of brutality and cruelty, not stopping short even of murder; and that the "slave trade," which, he says, momentarily slackened after a native uprising of four years ago, is rapidly

increasing. He makes these charges as the result of a personal investigation conducted in 1904 and 1905, when he visited the islands of San Thomé and Príncipe, and traversed Angola from the coast to the inland seats of the alleged traffic in human beings. This journey he made with the utmost difficulty, suffering greatly from fever, and only by good fortune escaping what he believes was an attempt to poison him in order to insure his silence respecting what he had seen and heard. His narrative impresses us as the work of a careful, keen, and honest observer, and while it includes much resting on hearsay, it also presents evidence that seems imperatively demanding an answer. Apart from its main thesis the book contains some useful information respecting the characteristics and customs of the native tribes, the climate and scenery, and the animal and vegetable life of the region explored by Mr. Nevinson. But its chief significance, of course, is as an indictment, and an indictment not to be readily "pigeonholed." (*A Modern Slavery*. By Henry W. Nevinson. Harper & Brothers, New York. \$2, net.)

Luther's Postils These homilies on the portions of the Gospels appointed to be read in churches at various times in the church year Luther considered the best of his works. Begun in 1521 at the instance of his protector, the Elector Frederic, they were designed for use by preachers incompetent to fulfill their office without such help. Alas that four centuries of advancing enlightenment have not yet freed all clergymen from such crutches! The present edition, presenting these Postils for the first time in an English dress, is creditable to the Lutheran scholars under whose auspices it appears. This volume contains sermons for Epiphany, Lent, and Easter. (*The Precious and Sacred Writings of Martin Luther*. Vol. XI. Church Postils. Edited by John Nicholas Lenker, D.D. Standard Edition of Luther's Works. Lutherans in All Lands Company, Minneapolis, Minn.)

Mr. Pratt There is much rustic humor in this tale by the author of "Cap'n Eri," and Mr. Pratt is a continuation of the former country philosopher. That two tired young stock-brokers should elect to follow the rules of the "Natural Life" as laid down in a popular book is not so incongruous as it might have seemed a few years ago. Mr. Pratt is engaged as their factotum, and relates their adventures with much shrewd comment. The story is absurd, but it is meant to be; it serves its purpose as a diversion, a gentle satire upon a recent popular fad. (*Mr. Pratt*. By Joseph C. Lincoln. A. S. Barnes & Co., New York.)

The Parson's Outlook A pleasant, cultivated parson, of social qualities, is this one who reports colloquies among his fellow-parsons, and draws profiles of them when they are looking the other way. He has a mild, innocuous humor, to which one's attention is especially called, as he regards humor, if not an exclusively English quality, at any rate almost a prerogative of English speech. His comments upon character and circumstance are those of a gentlemanly scholar, and will not revolutionize the thinking of any one. The papers have appeared in two of the popular English periodicals. (*The Parson's Outlook: Studies in Clerical Life and Character*. By Edward Rees. Longmans, Green & Co., New York.)

The Primrose Way It will not be easy to discover the connection between the title and the contents of this latest addition to "Mark Twain's Library of Humor." It is quite possible that the title itself is a joke selected for the express purpose of awaking hopes which it does not gratify. There are some familiar selections which were very pleasant reading when they first appeared, and which will bear preservation; Mark Twain's "Playing Courier," for instance, and Mr. Sutphen's, "First Aid to the Injured," and Margaret Sutton Briscoe's "Goose Chase." One finds pleasure, too, in recognizing Mr. Warner's delightful comment on plumbers; and Mr. Cozzens's "Sparrowgrass Papers," so widely read a generation ago, is represented by a humorous chapter on "Getting a Glass of Water." It must be confessed, however, that there is a good deal of inequality; that the selections are not only catholic but promiscuous, and include some things that would better have been left out. (*Mark Twain's Library of Humor: The Primrose Way*. Harper & Brothers, New York. \$1.50.)

Recollections of a Chemist There is a refreshing old-time atmosphere about the volume of reminiscences recently written by the famous English chemist, Sir Henry Enfield Roscoe. In a way, it recalls that other Roscoe, Sir Henry's grandfather, remembered not only by his own writings, but by the eulogies of Washington Irving, Lord Holland, the terrible Creevey, and many another admirer. Sir Henry himself has a good deal to say concerning the ancestor who began life as a waiter in a coffee-house and ended it famed as a historian. He has much, too, in the way of illuminating recollections of later giants of the nineteenth century—the illustrious Bunsen, who pointed him the path to success in chemical research; Faraday, Pasteur, Hux-

ley, Tyndall, Lister, Kirchhoff, Helmholtz, Dalton, Jevons, and, outside the realm of science, Gladstone, Martineau, Francis Newman, Richard Hutton, John Bright, and Sir Leslie Stephen. But perhaps the most interesting aspect of his volume lies in the light it throws on the progress of scientific investigation in Great Britain from the time, not long distant, when the experimenter was heavily handicapped by lack of or bulk of apparatus to the present day, when invention has come so generously to his aid. Americans, it must be said, will not find the book of equal interest throughout; but even where the interest is purely personal or local the pages are so liberally supplied with anecdote or livened with touches of a quaint humor that there will be little inclination to curtail the reading. (The Life and Experiences of Sir Henry Enfield Roscoe, D.C.L., LL.D., F.R.S. Written by Himself. The Macmillan Company, New York. \$4.)

*The Romance of
Modern Agriculture*

In our issue of December 23, 1905, we commented on Mr. W. S.

Harwood's account of the remarkable work that is being done by Mr. Luther Burbank in the actual creation of new forms of plant life. This account Mr. Harwood has now followed by an even more interesting exposition of the wonderful progress attained within the past few years in all domains of agriculture—progress such as eminently to warrant the title he has given his book, "The New Earth." Mr. Harwood may not have firsthand knowledge of the many themes he discusses, but he does possess the ability of exhibiting scientific achievements in terms intelligible to the lay reader, and also the gift of bringing out vividly the romance inherent in the relations of man with nature, even when these relations have to do with the seemingly prosaic incidents of every-day manual labor. His first few chapters show the advances that have been made in the study of the soil—advances which include methods of fertilization by the aid of bacteria and more correct knowledge of the adaptation of crops to a given soil. He then passes on to show how science is improving, and, as in the case of Mr. Burbank, even creating, forms of plant life suitable for foodstuffs or manufacturing purposes; and the present-day methods of fighting the external as well as internal enemies of plant life—scales, worms, etc. Next come exceedingly informative chapters on modern horticulture, modern forestry, modern animal husbandry, and modern dairying, and finally some chapters of a miscellaneous character, of which the most interesting is perhaps one relating the results of recent tests to show the relative

value to the human organism of different foods. The book may be warmly commended to the general reader, and it seems to us almost indispensable to the farmer who would make intelligent use of the forces now at his disposal. (The New Earth. By W. S. Harwood. The Macmillan Company, New York. \$1.75, net.)

*The Silver Age of
the Greek World*

This is a new edition, largely rewritten, of Professor Mahaffy's "The

Greek World under Roman Sway." The book has been out of print for a number of years, and has become to a certain extent antiquated by reason of the larger knowledge of Greek life and the wider and more intelligent view of that life. The period is one of immense interest, not only to students and scholars, but to all who care for the development of the human spirit. Less striking in its productivity and much inferior in original power to the Golden Age of the Greek world, it was nevertheless the age in which Greece became the schoolmaster of the world, and the spirit of Hellenism was carried into almost all lands; and while Greece was conquered by Roman arms, Rome in turn was penetrated and largely subjugated by Greek thought. Beginning with the discussion of the Roman conquest, the book ends with a chapter on "The Literature of the First Century," tracing the spirit of Hellenism in Asia, Egypt, and Italy, with special chapters on Cicero and Plutarch. Professor Mahaffy is not only a competent scholar, but he is also an interesting writer. (The Silver Age of the Greek World. By John Pentland Mahaffy, C.V.O., D.D., D.C.L. The University of Chicago Press, Chicago. \$3, net. Postage, 17c.)

*Turkey's
Capital City*

This volume upon Constantinople exhibits an unusual combination of triple excellence. The print, the pictures, and the text vie with each other for commendation. Dr. van Millingen enriches the real importance of his descriptions by a readable and limpid style of writing, showing sane, individual judgment, competent study, and sympathetic interest. The divisions of his subject fall easily into three main parts: The making of Constantinople; along the walls; and among the churches. The closing chapters are devoted to impressions of the modern city, its religion and its people. The Epilogue is a suggestive, far-seeing, and valuable contribution to the consideration of a great problem, always difficult because of the heterogeneous character of the population of Turkey. (Constantinople. Painted by Warwick Goble. Described by Alexander van Mil-

lingen, M.A., D.D. The Macmillan Company, New York. \$6.)

*The Up-to-Date
Waitress*

The majority of housewives in large cities at the present time are obliged to engage waitresses and chambermaids who have had practically no training; for those who are expert in their professions readily command wages which cannot be afforded by people of moderate means. The best that the average housekeeper can hope to start with is good natural material—intelligence, deftness, and willingness to learn. The technique of waiting and the care of rooms must be imparted by her. Any lady who is about to undertake a task of this kind will find Miss Hill's book of great value. The book can also be recommended to waitresses in modest households who have acquired the fundamental principles of their work, but who desire to learn those more elaborate details a mastery of which will enable them to obtain better-paid positions. The book is attractively illustrated. (The Up-to-Date Waitress. By Janet McKenzie Hill. Little, Brown & Co., Boston. \$1.50.)

*A Virginian's
Reminiscences*

Mr. John Goode, whose "Recollections of a Lifetime" has been recently published, is certainly in a position to contribute some interesting chapters to the history of the past half-century of political life in America. Born in Virginia in 1829, he has been a member of the Virginia General As-

sembly, the Virginia Secession Convention, the Confederate Congress, the Congress of the United States, and the latest Virginia Constitutional Convention. He was also at one time Solicitor-General of the United States. Thus he has had ample opportunity to watch the trend of events and to make intimate acquaintance with many of the men active in the affairs of the Nation during the past fifty years. But if he has improved his opportunity, evidence must be sought elsewhere than in the present volume, which deals chiefly with the obvious and the well known. There is, to be sure, a great deal in the way of comment on public personages, but little that increases our knowledge of them, with the possible exceptions of Robert E. Lee, Fitzhugh Lee, Early, and Terry. Nor, save in the case of the Confederate Congress, does Mr. Goode tell us much that is new concerning the various deliberative bodies of which he has been a part. His book further suffers from the inclusion of reminiscences of persons of small importance, and from the incorporation of sundry public addresses and papers, in themselves worth reprinting but hardly to be classified as "recollections." Indeed, outside of the instances mentioned and some good anecdotes, there is little that will repay either the general reader or the historian in search of material. (Recollections of a Lifetime. By John Goode. The Neale Publishing Company, New York. \$2.)