

New Books in Brief Review

Things I Shouldn't Tell. By the Author of "Uncensored Recollections." Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co. \$4.50.

SCANDAL and gossip by a bad old man. The unknown author of these reminiscences of the great and half-world admits that his identity is a *secret de Polichinelle* for those who were familiar with English and foreign society during the sixty-odd years preceding the Great War. By his own admission, also, he was an intimate friend of Edward VII when Prince of Wales, and most of the royal family except, one imagines, Queen Victoria. Most of his anecdotes concern the nobility and gentry, gamblers, a few men of letters, servants, ladies of uneasy virtue—to whom he alludes with a fine old Eighteenth Century manner as "fair Paphians"—and the like. One gets an impression of malicious laughter through false teeth, of the old beau with his corset and wig and make-up retelling old scandals about forgotten people to anyone willing to listen. Unfortunately for one's disgust and moral indignation, many of the stories are worth telling and are well told. But about the book is an unpleasant, ghoulish atmosphere of senile malice. The author is, one fears, a horrid old man.

Gold by Gold. By Herbert S. Gorman. New York: Boni & Liveright. \$2.50.

STRONG modern stuff—crude, raw life in Greenwich Village and elsewhere, and a sensitive, near poet who goes from bad to worse. This hectic, sombre book smacks more of Russia than New York. It is unpleasant, but effective in spots.

The Bishop's Granddaughter. By Robert Grant. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. \$2.00.

IN his latest book, Judge Grant discusses at length a burning problem of modern American life, but discusses it without heat. In an easy, agreeable style the author presents the American habit of divorce.

The Shadows of the Gloomy East. By Ferdinand A. Ossendowski. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. \$3.00.

MORE light on Russia, though the light is described as a shadow. Dr. Ossendowski never understates his case; in this instance, he has collected so many strange stories, beliefs, superstitions, and actions that one is led to believe

that Russia is a madhouse. Interesting and doubtless true, all of these details, but the general effect strikes one as inaccurate.

Life and Erica. By Gilbert Frankau. New York: The Century Co. \$2.00.

A RATHER interesting story of a talented, self-confident young girl trying to live her own life in London. Her punishment seems more severe than she deserves. It is obviously a story with a moral, but what the moral is nobody seems to know. The last paragraph explains "that great lesson which teaches how all true love is selfless, a giving and not a receiving, self-sacrifice and not desire," so that may be it, but one doesn't see how Erica and Robin learned that lesson. However, let us hope they did.

Coal and Civilization. By E. C. Jeffrey. New York: The Macmillan Co. \$2.50.

THIS book is profusely illustrated with highly magnified cross sections of coal of various kinds, showing the material which has gone into its formation. The writer gives the general subject of coal and civilization less space than he does its particular nature. One wishes he would expand his earlier chapters which are most interesting for the layman and all too short.

Where the Bright Waters Meet. By Harry Plunkett Greene. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. \$4.00.

A PLEASANT book of trout-fishing reminiscences and gossip about companions in sport. The illustrations of the little English stream where Mr. Greene did most of his fishing are as delightful as the text. A book which will be appreciated by laymen as well as fishermen.

The Black Cargo. By J. P. Marquand. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. \$2.00.

THIS story of the clipper-ship era in a New England seacoast town will undoubtedly increase the reputation of its author. But the book's chief interest is its promise of even better things in the future.

While the plot of the story revolves about the love affair of the hero, the attention of the reader is almost entirely centered in the character of Eliphalet Greer. A strange, contradictory, bad man,

living in the conviction of sin which is the hell of the Puritan, but continuing steadily in his wickedness. He is not always convincing, but he is so powerfully, so picturesquely drawn, that one feels the author is capable of even finer work.

Dreaming Spires. By Diana Patrick. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. \$2.00.

Ouida up-to-date.

Stella Defiant. By Clare Sheridan. New York: Greenberg, Publisher, Inc. \$2.00.

ONE might have been sure from Clare Sheridan's other books that she could not write a good novel. But it is still a surprise to find that she could possibly write such a bad one. "Stella Defiant" is a combination of wretched writing and bad taste, unrelieved by the author's dogged attempt to present a "defiant" heroine, who shall transcend convention, marriage, and stupid parents.

Drag. By William Dudley Pelley. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. \$2.00.

A NOVEL describing the long, intimate agony of a young man married to an entire family of parasites. He escapes, finally, long after the reader would have shot all his in-laws and jumped into the river.

The New Poetry. Edited by Harriet Monroe and Alice Corbin Henderson. New York: The Macmillan Co. \$2.50.

A REVISED and enlarged edition of "The New Poetry," published originally in 1917, bringing the anthology down to date. The editors do not imply any technical limitations in the qualifying term "new." This excellent volume includes modern poetry of all kinds, from the freest of free verse to stiff and starched Academics. No one will agree with all the editorial pickings and choosings, but the more initiate of us will agree with most of them.

The Northern Muse. An Anthology of Scots Vernacular Poetry. Arranged by John Buchan. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. \$3.00.

AN admirable anthology. Everything is in it that ought to be in it—and naturally some that ought not to be. But what a horrible language!