

THE HARP OF LIFE. By Elizabeth Godfrey. New York: Henry Holt & Company. \$1.50.

There are two Master-Harpers whose touch upon the strings has power to draw out the complex harmonies which make the music of life. We submit willingly enough to him of the crimson garments and shining eyes, and our hearts sway to the rhythm of his playing; but when the black-robed one comes out of the shadows and lays a chill hand upon us we shrink and wail, not knowing that without him our life's music would be but trivial tunes, forgotten as soon as heard. . . . And the names of the two players are Love and Sorrow.

This quotation is used as a preface to *The Harp of Life*, which is another musical novel, and a good one, too. Miss Godfrey does not exaggerate the eccentricities of musicians as so many writers are tempted to do, but in Roger Redway, the violinist, Graham Knowles, the conductor, and Sir Hervey and Lady Gilderdale, true lovers of music, she presents to her readers very human characters. There is no heroine to this story, unless Rose Alba might be called one. She is a type of any number of women one meets in every-day life. She has a fair amount of good looks, a voice that is not above the average, and a character that is below the average. She marries Roger Redway in the hope that he may help her in a musical career. But domestic life does not suit her. She comes under the influence of Mrs. Temple-Smith, who writes novels on the subject of the emancipation of women; and she is so dominated by the absurd theories that such a woman holds that she leaves her husband. There is no question of another man. Mrs. Roger Redway is without temperament, and therefore free from a certain kind of temptation. She struggles along for a year or so alone, and after losing her voice in a pathetic sort of way, she is glad enough to return to the doggedly faithful husband. Roger Redway is a strong, forceful character, and the mere hint that we get of the love which came near being fanned into being by his passion for music is the undercurrent in his life. His wife, self-absorbed and cold in her vanity and selfishness, does not dream of what might have been. And this is life as we often see it.

F. M. H.