

theless at the end I can only cry, "Heaven forbid, Mrs. Gerould, that the younger generation ever indulge in such unrelieved morbidity as do you!" Through these pages strut insanity, degeneracy, and disease. The psychological terrorisms are more grotesque to me than those of Poe. And how skilful Mrs. Gerould is. She develops her most macabre conceptions with all the suavity of tea table mannerisms. "The Knight's Move" seems to me the best story in the book. I can remember when it appeared, and the discussion it set in motion in college courses in ethics. "The Toad and the Jewel", for sheer physical horror, is hard to equal. "Blue Bonnet" has the insistency of actual madness. I had a feeling as I read that I was the husband, that something must be done to stop the conclusion — which, in the end, is all too inconclusive. Nor does Mrs. Gerould resort to the impossible for her effects. She knows that her abnormal types exist, and she knows that we know; but she does not spare us the pain of seeing them writhe on the point of her spear. Occasionally I do not understand her; but that, doubtless, as in "Belshazzar's Letter", is part of her method. Her method? She is curiously reminiscent, yet daringly original. There are echoes of Henry James in style, of Stockton in method, of Edith Wharton, and of Mrs. Gerould herself in an earlier mood. A fine performance; but not a pleasant one. How much Freud has helped her — though she does not call him by his name with the same brutality that we find in Sherwood Anderson, for example!

—J. F.

Insanity Plus

EDNA FERBER'S "Gigolo" I have not yet read; but I imagine that her stories will give you hours of delight and refreshment. For Mrs. Gerould's "Valiant Dust" (Scribner) I can imagine no such thing. They are fine stories; one or two of them as fine in development and performance as anything that she has done. Never-