

of his previous novels—man's craving for religion, the contrast between wealth and poverty, and the effects upon character of unlawful love. He handles these essentially difficult subjects with sincerity and admirable delicacy. His description of character is excellent in the case of the minor persons, but the major persons do not convince. Edward Churchill, the central figure, never succeeds in gaining the reader's belief in him nor sympathy with him. He alone of the family group in his childhood home is unconvincing. The mother is extremely real, detestably so, and the brothers are alive. Even the old servant, Maria, and the various boys at school are actual—particularly the tragic Jarvis, he of the graveyard cough with which he entertains his fellows, until the day when he has to go to work in a shop and becomes the victim of the boys' cruel caste snobbery. And Walsden, the missionary, is one of the most authentic persons in recent fiction. But Churchill is a prig in his boyhood and a weakling in manhood. His religion never seems vital, as Walsden's is, and his vacillations about the ministry lack sufficient motivation. He puts belief off and on too easily. He shows inherent weakness in letting himself be so dominated by his piously crafty mother, as well as in the entanglement of his later life. The author obviously expects the reader's approval, or at least sympathy, in Churchill's elopement with a married woman and his subsequent life with her, but the whole affair appears unreal. (Why is Mr. Maxwell always writing about the woman who transgresses the moral law?) Lillian is a poor thing, not worth the sacrifice Churchill made for her.

The story is huddled together at the last, so that the closing events appear dreamlike. And the final chapters are a sop to the happy-ender.

THE MIRROR AND THE LAMP. W. B. Maxwell. Bobbs-Merrill; \$1.75.

Mr. Maxwell, novelist, has given place for four years to Captain Maxwell of the British Army, fighting with the Fusiliers in France. The war however has no part in his new novel, in which the struggles are all mental and spiritual. He says of his title:

The lamp is one's inmost self—what we call the soul—the mirror is the mind. The lamp is constant in its power to light the mirror, and show what is fair and what is foul.

In this book, which is in some respects the best thing he has done, Mr. Maxwell repeats the themes