

In a compact little volume of a hundred and twenty-five pages, entitled "India" (B. W. Huebsch), Mr. J. Keir Hardie, the Labor leader in the British Parliament, records the impressions and information gathered by him from a brief sojourn in that perturbed land. The core of the book lies in its views regarding India "before taking and after taking" British treatment. The conclusion is, in the words of Burke when discussing a similar problem in which the American Colonies were concerned, that "everything given as a remedy to the public complaint has been followed by a heightening of the distemper." This distemper of the nation, asserts Mr. Hardie, is now practically beyond the control of the British Government, and all because the superimposed Governors have failed to recognise the natural power of the highly-educated natives. "A very little statesmanship, inspired by a very little sympathetic appreciation of the situation, could easily set things to rights." When British officials are restrained from acting on official boards of which they are not even members ; when the councils for villages are popularly elected and are held responsible for the collection of taxes ; when collectors and other permanent officials are not made chairmen of any boards ; when promotion for the natives from the Provincial Civil Service to the Indian Civil Service without the red-tape requirement of going to London to take the examination for promotion, — when these reforms are established, says the author, peace and prosperity will come to India. Mr. Hardie has not, we may say, assimilated all his information gathered in his two months' stay in India, but he has written a book that will interest and instruct everyone who is interested in Great Britain's major problem.

Mr. Harold Murdock, a Boston banker and man of letters, is well equipped to rehearse the story of Boston's great fire of thirty-seven years ago, and he tells it admirably in epistolary form, naming his book "1872: Letters Written by a Gentleman in Boston to his Friend in Paris, Describing the Great Fire." The volume is issued in a sumptuous limited edition (Houghton) with many illustrations both of Boston before the fire and of scenes in the burning or already burnt district. The woodcuts and lithographs transport the reader to that good old time when Boston streets were even more crooked and narrow and tangled than at present; and the letters, with their skilfully feigned appearance of having been hurriedly written while the ruins were still smoking, maintain the illusion. But as Mr. Murdock was only ten years old at the time of the fire, he could hardly have seen and done all that the supposed letter-writer chronicles as his part in the tremendous drama. However, there is no attempt to deceive or to mystify. The author appends his list of authorities, with other explanatory and illustrative matter, and one must admire the skill with which he has used his material. A sharp contrast with present municipal conditions is revealed in the statement that at the time of the fire "the city fathers were for the most part men of standing and responsibility in the community, and Boston suffered more from their narrow conservatism and conscientious economies than from anything suggestive of that gross evil the modern name for which is 'graft.'" A passing reference reminds the reader that Froude was lecturing in Tremont Temple, on the English in Ireland, before the embers had cooled. He had but a small audience and was not in his happiest mood.