

THE GIVERS. By Mary E. Wilkins Freeman. (Harper and Brothers. \$1.25.)

THE first story in Mrs. Freeman's latest volume, "The Givers," conveys a much needed lesson to many people in regard to giving inappropriate wedding, and other, gifts. One cannot help sympathizing with the poor little bride who needed underclothes and the other necessities, but who got silver card-cases and alcohol teakettles; and with the young man who did not smoke, but who received ash-trays and valuable cigarette-cases. And yet, there is the other side. The longed-for unnecessary, when, by chance, it does arrive, must give more pleasure, infinitely, than the expected necessary. Personally, we have always rejoiced with the old lady to whom a charity visitor gave two dollars to buy a flannel skirt, and who bought, instead, a huge bottle of perfumery—because she had all her life wanted perfumery, and never had had any, and she did have an old skirt! However, a certain sense in giving is desirable, and in this story Mrs. Freeman conveys the lesson entertainingly and forcefully.

The other stories,—there are eight in all,—with the exception of "Joy," are not quite up to Mrs. Freeman's earlier standard. The situations seem somewhat too forced and made up. Nothing like little Lucy could be possible, nor is Eglantina, with her birthmark, either agreeable or natural, and the "Reign of the Doll" is not convincing. We do not mean that impossible or unlikely stories are not good: they are often the best; only Mrs. Freeman's great gifts do not lie in this direction. She is eminently a realist, and her excursions into the bizarre are not satisfying.

In "Joy," however, she is as firmly as ever on her own ground, and that story, with "The Givers," and, perhaps, "The Last Gift," make the whole book worth while—indeed, give it a high place among volumes of short stories.

THE FRONTIERSMEN. By Charles Egbert Craddock. (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Company. \$1.50.)

THE many admirers of Miss Murfree will eagerly welcome this latest book of hers, which, although unlike most of its predecessors, is yet redolent of the peculiar atmosphere of her stories of the valley of the Great Smoky. This is a collection of short stories of the period preceding the Revolution, and across the pages move the stalwart figures of the pioneers and the dusky forms of the Cherokees, whose extinction is a source of deep regret to the descendants of those who fought them to the death. The first story, "The Linguister," is a charming story of a maiden who cried "wolf" to save her lover. "A Victor at Chungke" graphically describes the life and death of a boy captive. Each tale is in itself a gem, so artistically has the author arranged its setting, and the Tennessee mountains have lost none of their charm. As a contribution to the literature of the period it has a value, for these traditions are dying out, and must be embalmed soon or be forever lost.