

LITERATURE.

"THE WONDER BOOK" AND "HAPPY HEARTS."

Messrs. Ward, Locke and Co. have forwarded copies of their well-known Children's books in anticipation of the Christmas season. "The Wonder Book" is a beautiful production for children—equal to any of its predecessors of former years. It is a gem of the printer's art. The coloured picture on the outside of the cover is a reproduction of "In Wonderland," by Sheridan Knowles, R.J. In all there are thirteen coloured pictures. The other illustrations are numerous and varied in character to suit the letter-press. Airships and motor-cars are special features of the present issue, while dogs, cats, and other children's pets are presented in attractive stories relating to their habits and tricks; and the illustrations of these and the children's games are full of amusement. Many of the illustrations are photographs of a high order of excellence. The story of Orpheus is told in simple language and illustrated, Orpheus playing his harp to maidens and snakes. "Effie's Happy Christmas" is one of the longer stories and has a delightful Santa Claus making children happy and himself looking the embodiment of pleasure. "Altogether the Wonder Book" is true to its name and a credit to those engaged in its preparation.

"Happy Hearts"—a picture book for boys and girls—though less artistic and less expensive, has its own merits. It is edited by Harry Golding, and the cover picture—coloured—is by W. Heath Robinson, a well-known artist. Teddy Bears have a story to themselves, and a small Teddy occupies a prominent place in Father Christmas's airship in one of the coloured illustrations—

And what a cargo he has brought,
Great clumps of mistletoe,
And holly boughs and Christmas trees
With candles row on row
While fastened round the aeroplane
Are myriads of toys,
The very sort to warm the hearts
Of babies, girls, and boys.

In both volumes there is plenty of rhyming verse of the kind children like, simple and direct, and with a twinging movement in it.

"SWEDENBORG AND THE SAPIENTIA ANGELICA."

Messrs. Constable and Company, Ltd., London, are publishing a series of small books under the title of "Philosophies, Ancient and Modern," of which "Swedenborg and the Sapiencia Angelica" is one. To most people Swedenborg is incomprehensible, at least in his theological and philosophical works. Dr. Frank Sewall, M.A., D.D., is the author of the present work, and his endeavour is to make Swedenborg a little more easily understood. His own interpretations of Swedenborg's philosophy make an effective dilution, for which readers should be thankful. It will be noticed that the author occasionally reads into Swedenborg a knowledge of things scientific, which, if that great seer saw at all, he saw them after off. Dr. Sewall lives in the age of the "Electron." Swedenborg lived in that of the "Atom." It will be all the better for mankind should science, while lighting new fires, shed light on the theories of the Swedish mystic. So far it is generally admitted that when Swedenborg entered the mystic gateway of that rich imaginative world of things spiritual, he became a lonely figure, leaving the masses of mankind far behind him. Dr. Sewall seems to have a grudge against Emerson for his treatment of Swedenborg's Revelations. But Emerson's judgment is very widely approved. Seeing that Emerson showers page on page of eulogistic epigrams on the benign head of Swedenborg, he may be forgiven—if not excused—when he hesitates at the following relation, for instance:—

Awaking, one morning from sleep, I saw two angels descending from heaven, one from the southern quarter and the other from the eastern, each in his chariot drawn by white horses. The chariot of the angel from the southern quarter shone like silver, and that of the angel of the eastern quarter like gold, and the reins which they held in their hands glowed with a flaming light like the dawn of day.

With such a prolific writer as Swedenborg, with his fifty volumes, each a masterpiece in itself, and on such subjects as mathematics, astronomy, mechanics, chemistry, anatomy, and physiology on the one hand, and the numerous theological and philosophical works on the other, only a cursory glance is possible in this little book by Dr. Sewall. Despite the greatness of the task and the small space, the author has succeeded in elucidating much that ordinary readers would find difficult otherwise. In addition to the exposition of Swedenborg's works, a short sketch of his life is given, showing how he devoted the first part of his life to natural history, and the second part to the study of spiritual things.

"FIGHTING THE ICEBERGS."

"Fighting the Icebergs" is Mr. Frank T. Bullen's latest story of the sea. (George Bell and Sons, Ltd., London.) Mr. Bullen's stories of the sea are inexhaustible. Their number suggest the time-worn saying, "There are as many fish in the sea as ever were caught." He is truly a specialist in the line he has taken up for the exercise of his pen. This latest is a splendid story for boys and youths, though people of any age may well enjoy it, and learn from it how the difficulties of life are to be met in the kind of spirit that compels victory in life's battle. All the ships in this story were built in and sailed out of Dundee, which has been a whaling centre for generations. There they know how to build and man the ships that do battle with the ice-floes, the icebergs and the other terrible things that grip and crush, and sometimes destroy those that do down to the sea in ships. The sphere of the exciting incidents is limited to the usual whaling grounds of the Arctic region with Dundee as the home port. Mr. Bullen extends the time to about twenty years in order to give Angus McFie, junior, time to grow to manhood. The senior Angus stumbling home one dark night in Dundee, excessively loaded with whiskey, fell over a bundle that was neither animate nor noiseless. Taking the bundle home to his landlady, it was discovered to be a boy about two years old. This foundling proved in time to be a wonderful hero. As Mr. Bullen will have it

This foundling proved in time to be a wonderful hero. As Mr. Bullen will have it there are a large proportion of heroes in this book. The two Anguses are brave, clever men, and leading on their men to heroic deeds. In several of Mr. Bullen's works the crews of his ships are shaded to a dark degree, with a possible good one among them. The case is quite different here. Nothing is clearer than that this story is largely auto-biographical. The author has—not too obtrusively—interwoven his own religious experiences, and the accomplishments by which he is able to write F.R.G.S. after his name, with deeds of daring and endurance. He shows how knowledge is acquired more readily and more accurately by doing things than by reading about them, corroborating Sir Walter Scott, who said the best part of a man's education is the part that he takes to himself. Mr. Bullen manages the particular Scottish dialect of Dundee very well, but few Scotsmen use the endearing expression coming so often from the lips of Angus senior. Fearless and competent before he "turned over a new leaf," he became increasingly so after, and added to these qualities a firm belief that Providence was working in his interest though he could not sometimes understand the plan of operations. He was reticent, consuming his own smoke, but always ready for emergencies. Angus, junior, except in years, could hardly be distinguished from his foster-father. Heaven was on his side, but he did his share of pulling.

Mr. Bullen says that, the way to come to an appreciation of the good things of life is to go to sea in a whaler. Most people on reading this book will accept the assurance of so good an authority and forego the experience. The toils and hardships are sometimes compensated by scenes of grandeur as may be seen from the following description:—

Suddenly Angus lifted his hand and pointed to the mighty outline of a great glacier-end which, as he spoke, bowed forward and fell in stately fashion, perhaps a million tons of ice, into the placid sea. The spectacle was grand beyond belief to those who have never witnessed it, especially when seen as this was at a distance of five miles, for the enormous upheaval of the sea as it received the vast mass was perfectly visible as if it had been along side, yet there was no sound. Then after what seemed a long interval came the awful, thunderous boom and roar of the fall, while a great succession of waves tossed the ship about as if she had been a chip in a mountain torrent, making the watch below rush up on deck with blanched faces, full of wonder and fear. And when noise and sea had subsided there was the latest launch, a wondrous island of clear ice, fantastic in shape and looking nearly as high as the cross of St. Paul's.

It is pleasant to read of so much success after the arduous labours of both the captains, and readers may rest assured that there is never a dull page in the book.

"NIETZSCHE."

"Nietzsche," by Anthony M. Ludovici, is the latest of the series of books being published by Messrs. Constable and Co., London, under the title of "Philosophies, An-

ished by Messrs. Constable and Co., London, under the title of "Philosophies, Ancient and Modern." There is a preface of Dr. Oscar Levy, an ardent disciple of Nietzsche. Within the compass of this small book of one hundred pages the author has done all that could be reasonably be expected when it is remembered that a short account of the philosopher's

life, and all that is vital in his philosophy, as expressed in his half score of books, is included. The author understands the art of compression. Both in the preface and in the author's work, however, too much space is given to replying to opponents—not to say traducers—of Nietzsche. It is unreasonable to expect, as the author seemingly does, the "average European" to understand Nietzsche. He did not write for the "average European," but for a select few. The author himself gives the best excuse for the so-called traducers when he asks for time to assimilate the strange philosophy that says:—

Do I advise you to love your neighbour?

Rather do I advise you to flee from your neighbour and to love the most remote, higher than love to your neighbour is love unto the most remote future man. It is the most remote, your children and your children's children, who pay for your love unto your neighbour.

The evidences of the power of Christianity are so many, and so valuable to the world to-day—indeed they were never more so—that the wounds inflicted by Nietzsche, despite the assertions of the author, can scarcely be regarded as of a fatal nature. It is presumptuous to say that Nietzsche solved the meaning, the origin, and the intrinsic value of terms "good" and "evil." It may be true that this problem was the passion of his life. Job and his friends had the same passion. Nietzsche held that "good" and "evil" were merely terms used whereby to acquire power, and that all forms of morality are weapons in the struggle for power. To the question, was Christian morals pure? the answer is:—

He attacked Christian morals, and declared them to be like all other morals, merely a weapon in the hands of a certain type of man, with which that type struggled to power.

Nietzsche was pleased to rechristian "good" and "evil" as "noble" and "slave" moralities. He endeavoured—the author says he succeeded—in estimating the values of these moralities. The Christian morality he found to be of the slave quality.

In Christian values Nietzsche read nihilism, decadence, degeneration, and death. They were calculated to favour the multiplication of the least desirable on earth.

"Life is activity," said Herbert Spencer.

Nietzsche's definition is more elaborate:—

He defined life practically, uprightly, and bravely, as appropriation, injury, conquest of the strange and weak, suppression, severity, obtrusion of its own forms, incorporation, and, at least, putting it mildest, exploitation.

And Nietzsche believed that the struggle is to be endless; no day will ever arrive when the misery of life will be transformed into perfect bliss. Yet he

when the misery of life will be transformed into perfect bliss. Yet he is not enough of an evolutionist to see in the future a Superman. The world is never without a few specimens of the "Higher Man." Nietzsche calls on these to propagate their kind. There must be a ruling caste. The Christian belief in the moral order of things must be given up. It breeds a race of parasites.

Not contentedness, but more power; not peace at any price, but warfare; not virtue, but capacity. What is good? All that increases the feeling of power, will to power, power itself in man. What is bad? All that proceeds from weakness. What is happiness? The feeling that power increases, that resistance is overcome.

That is the moral code of Nietzsche's ideal society.

TRAVEL AND EXPLORATION.

"Travel and Exploration," includes in its October issue a contribution from the pen of "Searchlight," a frequent contributor to its pages, on "West Africa from Within." He says:—

As the popular notion of the West African colonies is crystallised in the epithet, "the white man's grave," it is not easy to understand the fascination of this insalubrious littoral. The charms of the sea, the plains, the illimitable desert, "the call of the wild" is more comprehensible. Yet the "call of the Coast" is as insistent as it is unaccountable. Though it may be true that vast riches lie buried beneath the green-splashed coastline, or in the heart of the damp, impenetrable forests, men who are wise, prefer tranquil poverty and comparative comfort in the homeland to certain sickness and uncertain wealth on the West coast of Darkest Africa. Yet it has a vast fascination for those who have adventured up the pea-soup coloured rivers, or lived in the mud-built native huts of the interior. The brilliant flowers of the coast are almost scentless, and the gaudy birds are practically without song; the days seem filled with choking heat-mists, and the nights are heavy with sleepless, breathless agony—still, the coaster loves the coast. Loves it, though his lungs reject the heavy, dull, suffocating air; clings to it, though he knows that its graveyards are filled with the bodies of strong young men.

An unusual insight into the life of a Russian monastery is afforded by Ernest Young in his account of "A Week with the Monks of Valamo." The section of the magazine devoted to the reviewing of exploration books ranges from the consideration of savage tribes of India, motor conditions in the Balkans, modern Hungary, and Spain to the development of the gun, steamships, and their story, Lake Como, and walking as education. The main portion of the publication deals with "Science and Sport in North China," "The Assam Borderland," "British Columbia for the Sportsman," "The Vogue of the Vosges," and "Motor Boat Cruising."

PIONEERING SEVENTY YEARS AGO.

"The Lost Echo," by James Green. (N.S. W. Bookstall Co., Sydney.) A very matter-

"The Lost Echo," by James Green. (N.S. W. Bookstall Co., Sydney.) A very matter-of-fact romancer Mr. Green proved himself to be in "The Selector"; but that prosaic bush story is an aerial flight of imagination in comparison with his latest production. A novel with a map, and a statistical table of wrocks, is indeed an Australian novelty. But these features are not in the least regrettable, since the interest of the book does not reside in the personal adventures of the hero and the heroine, but in the historical narrative of how the Richmond River and its one-time "big scrub" were opened up by the pioneer cedar cutters. It is a far back cry to 1840; and, obviously the author could know nothing personally of the men who, seventy years ago, forced a way through the densely timbered country between the Clarence River, of north-eastern New South Wales, and the Macpherson Range on the Queensland border, and first navigated the Richmond River from Ballina up to Coraki. However, Mr. Green has sedulously gathered the recollections of "the oldest inhabitants" of the Richmond, and collating with statistical records has woven them into a narrative which is historical—except where it strives to be romantic. It was in 1840 that Sir George Gibbs, Governor of New South Wales (which then included Victoria and Queensland) gave a fresh impulse to pastoral enterprise, by pointing out that sheep and cattle could be converted into exportable products by boiling down, and that hides and tallow would pay—after a fashion. At that epoch also the cedar forests of the Clarence had been very considerably cut out and hence pioneer enterprise was directed to the penetration of the "big scrub" and the opening up of the Richmond. How the little coaster Sally negotiated Ballina bar, and how Joe McGuire's bullock team made a way through tangled forest and rocky range from the watershed of the Clarence to the "Wudgee" forests of the Richmond—the story sets out in detail. The "big scrub" has vanished now, and so have the cedars. The rich alluvial flats are covered with maize and sugar-cane; "White Australia" sugar is the staple product, steamers ply regularly up and down the Richmond and come to grief on its bar. The blacks who raided McGuire's bullock team have long been gathered to their aboriginal forefathers; and traditions of the "Great Flood," of 1849 are now almost as obscure as those of Deucalion's Deluge.

Mr. Green is to be commended for having rescued from oblivion records of a very interesting pioneering period. His chief default is that he persistently mixes up present and past conditions. He describes the pioneer "on riders" of seventy years ago as equipped with neat valises of "American cloth containing a change of garments," and with "billies" carefully enclosed for saddle travel in real leather cases. He dilates on the enterprise and energy of police sergeants and troopers in hunting for illicit stills, by means of which unscrupulous farmers converted their cane juice into rum—at a time when sugar planting was utterly unknown in Australia. The imaginative portion of the story is easily summarised. The hero, an English immigrant yeoman, Jack Bindable, refuses to be "shouted" for at Grafton by a cedar cutting gang, and after a rough and tumble he fraternises with its members. He joins the Richmond River pioneering expedition, makes money out of cedar, takes up land, and meets a charming damsel reading Keats's poems to the musical accom-

takes up land, and meets a charming damsel reading Keats's poems to the musical accompaniment of a sylvan cascade. When the big flood comes along, he starts out in a boat to rescue her, but exhausts himself and is rescued by her.

The "Lost Echo," by the bye, is that of the damsel's "coo-ee" to her lover over the waste of flood waters. She is the daughter of a cockatoo squatter, whose wife considers a cedar-cutter not "class" enough, for a son-in-law. But as the hero turns up in Sydney in a well-cut suit, with his pockets full of money, he is allowed to take the young lady out yachting in "the harbour." At the imminent risk of a capsize, letting mainsheet and tiller take their own course, he brings his stormy suit to a successful conclusion, and subsequently becomes an exceedingly prosperous paterfamilias. There

his ultimate recovery.

Mrs. Brown, the housekeeper, with her endless pies and "things" for picnics appeals to every boy's appetite, and Billy, the black-fellow, who seemed to steer his way through life with a vocabulary of amazing shortness—the word "plenty" serving on almost every occasion—are characters typically true of their class and sympathetically introduced by the authoress. The book is illustrated by J. Macfarlane.

are no humorous features in the book—except its illustrations which, though not designed for that purpose, strike in some measure for that deficiency.

"A LITTLE BUSH MAID."

"A Little Bush Maid" is an Australian story by Mary Grant Bruce. (Ward, Locke and Co., London.) It is a real pleasure to recommend this story to Australian readers. The authoress may well take her place beside Lillian Turner, and may aspire to be classed with Australia's most favoured authoress—Ethel Turner. The publication of this book at this juncture, when the festive and gift season is approaching, is opportune, and it will no doubt find its place on many reward lists for young people of both sexes. The scene of the story is laid in northern Victoria. Norah, the girl in the story, is the only daughter of a squatter, David Linton. Having in infancy lost her mother, she was allowed to grow very much as her inclinations dictated. She had only one brother, Jim. When Jim came home for holidays and brought two of his school-mates with him, there was a stirring time on Billabong Station. Of all the horses on the station, Norah's was the swiftest. With splendid horses, a wide expanse of level country, and a genial Australian climate, the girl and the three boys had what young Australians enjoy to the fullest extent—a free, untrammelled life. Their first horse race—run while on their fishing expedition—is a typical Australian pastime. The accident to Jim marred the enjoyment only for a moment, for Jim was plucky and disliked giving his sister any anxiety. Norah, though simple in her ways and in entire ignorance of the world's ways, had a shrewdness and a courage very natural to herself but very unusual for a girl of her years. This was shown when a "swaggie" met her a little distance from the homestead, when she was out riding on Bobs and a favourite dog with her. Her daring, too, is shown when she discovers the hermit in a secluded spot of bush fifteen miles from the homestead, and, as the hermit thought, beyond the reach of everyone. This is the part of the story which shows that the authoress has a firm grip of her art. She succeeds admirably in her description of the lonely camp of the hermit, and the details of how he came to be there; the crisis when she rediscovered him delirious from fever, and his ultimate recovery.

Mrs. Brown, the housekeeper, with her