

it is distinguished among its fellows who dwell in the suburbs of literature by the excellence of its craftsmanship and the value of its contribution to the popular discussion of labour problems.

Nothing could be more gratifying to the lovers of law and order, as well as to those who are interested in social evolution, than the evidence of a growing consciousness of higher ideals and a deeper sense of rectitude in handling social questions, indicated by the increasing number of young writers in the field of journalism who are giving their best thought and attention to the pressing topics of the time. The author of *Men Born Equal* is one of these, and we recommend his book to the earnest consideration of every reader who ponders on these things. The fact that the great camping-ground of street railway strikes, to which Brooklyn is but now giving forcible illustration, provides the novelist and the thinker with material for a love story and a sociological study which are so welded together as to inculcate the same fundamental truth, imparts a large and timely significance to this volume. Macaulay's quatrain,

When none was for a Party,  
But all were for the State,  
And the Rich man helped the Poor,  
And the Poor man loved the Great,

adorns the title-page, and the pages following voice the sentiments of the arch-Whig. The conviction of Judge Jessel that "it is not through Populism that salvation will come; it is more likely to be through the reaction against Populism," would appear to be the writer's hope for the political dawn not yet at hand, but it is rash to harness what one of his characters says to the author's political horse. There is no mistaking the meaning of these words, however: "The man who goes straight goes far," says Tim Sullivan; "it isn't brains that makes a man govern men, nor education, nor money—it's the *man* of him!" But no review can do full justice to the book. There are pages of solemn rhetoric charged with an earnest pleading for the cause of "the voiceless millions all over the world—or, if not voiceless, they might well be so, for they are spent with labour and weak with lack of food, and their voices reach only to ears that are deaf, on which they beat in vain;" there are descriptive scenes and incidents of a

street railway strike which surpass the verisimilitude of mere journalism, because of the fusion of details in the solvent of imagination and the austerity and restraint which the writer has exerted over his "copy," for his revelations of newspaper practice prove that he writes from the inside. Then there is some splendid fooling with Tim Sullivan, the good-natured Irish politician, and Barry, who wears the foolscap as a foil to his neighbour Horace Marsh, who takes things rather too much in earnest for his own and everybody's good for a time. The frequent use of apt and well-chosen quotation and a habitual way Horace Marsh (who strikes us as being a subjective character study) has of buttressing his statements with references to certain authors, show that while deeply concerned with politics, the author has by no means neglected literature. If we are to have our theology and science and politics served to us in a simple and popular fashion, we can conceive of no better medium than that which Mr. Robinson has rendered so ably and so delightfully in his first venture—one which we shall hope to see him repeat.

THE HONOUR OF SAVELLI. By S. Levett Yeats. New York: D. Appleton & Co. \$1.00.

Among a batch of novels which arrived the other evening for critical vivisection, something tempting in the title and in the look of the opening sentences of *The Honour of Savelli* elected that novel to the privilege of precedence. As a further bait to a jaded appetite consequent on a week's dull reading, the novel in question purported to be written after the manner of Mr. Weyman. Truth to tell, we were somewhat sceptical at the outset; but let us say at once in amends that not since reading *A Gentleman of France* have we been so engrossed and captivated by the work of a new writer. The book was taken up at first as a foil to the pleasure of a cigar, but soon the "ambrosial weed" lost its flavour, and was forgotten. The spirit of other days and another clime took possession of us, and the bright embers in the grate turned a dull red and then an ashen gray. But still the spell was on us, and with breathless haste we followed the fortunes of the swash-buckler Di Savelli through escapades and ambushes, court intrigues and love adventures, until we saw him safely through

all his encounters, retired and happy, as so brave and honourable a knight deserved, in his castle of Aquila, among the Sabine Mountains, with the haughty Lady Angiola by his side. Seldom have we read a first novel with such genuine pleasure and gusto. Not that by any means the new-comer is equal in all respects to "the Dumas of the hour," as Mr. Weyman has been lightly called. There is a deeper and more varied knowledge of human nature, a finer analysis of motive, and a more masterly constructive skill in *A Gentleman of France*; but the creator of Ugo Di Savelli can break a lance with him who conceived Gaston De Marsac as a *raconteur* of exciting episodes, hairbreadth escapes, and magnificent sword play, and as a story-teller who is fired with "the spirit of the true Romance," and who can bear us on the rapid tide of a rattling narrative, which hurries us onward unresting until the happy *dénouement* is reached. The author has taken Dumas for his model, and this is evinced in the spirited action of dialogue and subtle movement, in the alertness of the characters, and in the adroitness with which he holds all the issues at stake and carries them on with growing interest till they reach their common goal.

The story, which it would be unfair to spoil by tracing here, is laid in that period of Italian history when Alexander VI. was Pope, and the infamous Borgias were tottering to their fall. We are introduced to the Duc De Tremouille, to the French king, to Cesare, Alexander, and to Lucrezia Borgia, to the Chevalier Bayard, and to Machiavelli; and some vivid pictures are drawn of the life of the court at Florence and Rome, and of adventurous peril in the career of a knight of the road at that agitating period in history. The main current of the story recalls *A Gentleman of France*, with its introduction of a mysterious political mission, but the motive-play of the leading figure, who is also the narrator, is altogether different, and gives an exaltation of character to Di Savelli which is lacking in De Marsac, though both have a common attraction for us in their manly and courageous virtues. Some of Mr. Yeats' scenes compare favourably with dramatic incidents in *A Gentleman of France*, though the latter surpasses the former in the variety and complexity of intricate plot and arrange-

ment. But, for a first novel, *The Honour of Savelli*, as a whole, promises well. Nor can we impute the charge of imitation to him, for although coming after *A Gentleman of France* in point of time, Mr. Yeats assures us that the book was written before he had read Mr. Weyman's brilliant novel. To him belongs, as much as to Mr. Weyman, the credit of the daring originality and bold conception which characterise both novels. *The Honour of Savelli*, we fear, has raised another vexed ghost on the horizon of Mr. Boyesen's troubled vision, and is a further outcome of that romantic movement which Mr. Zangwill holds responsible for setting so many writers "brooding on blood and writing in the reddest of inks."

TALES OF MEAN STREETS. By Arthur Morrison. Boston: Roberts Bros. \$1.00.

This is an unmistakably strong book. The East End and its dwellers have never before been painted from the same standpoint, nor in so vigorous and independent a fashion. That it gives the inevitable picture which sojourners in the neighbourhood must carry away, we certainly do not assert. It is distinctly limited, but limited because its point of view is individual, its purpose scrupulously truthful. Mr. Morrison's intention has been to tell just what he has seen, idealising nothing and keeping back little. He has carried it out with a frankness which no doubt some readers will term brutal, and which certainly wants some courage to face. They are pictures of misery, cruelty, sordidness, he gives us for the most part, pictures rather than descriptions; the moral showman never appears at all to pull a long face, or shake his head, or say "How pitiful!" or "How wrong!" The reader is left to make his own reflections, and they will not be comfortable ones, on "Lizerunt," "Without Visible Means," and "On the Stairs." Mr. Morrison has plainly a bias; and who has not? With the right or wrong of that bias literary criticism has nothing to do, provided he give it logical and forcible expression. It is, however, perfectly legitimate to take objection to the long monotony of dreariness, which the slight facetiousness of "The Red Cow Group," the comic mixture of rascality and hysteria in "A Conversion," the patient pluck in "Three Rounds," and