

understand, that he who runs may read him. To me such statements seem to be the very reverse of the truth." The play of "King Lear" in truth abounds in difficulties and obscurities, some of which remain, after commentatorship has done its utmost work, inexplicable. What, for example, is the meaning of "Good porter, turn the key, All cruels else subscribed" (III., vii., 67, 68)? We fear that Mr. Furness is right, when he speaks of the last four words as a phrase more puzzling even than "runaways' eyes" or the "dram of eale."

E. DOWDEN.

## Novel Notes.

**LAZARRE.** By Mary Hartwell Catherwood. 6s. (Grant Richards.)

The hapless dauphin, who was officially said to have perished in prison during the French Revolution, but according to tradition was rescued and carried overseas, is a figure of such romantic potentialities that it would have been strange indeed had the novelists neglected him. He makes a pitifully grotesque appearance in Mr. Meredith's "Harry Richmond" as a foolish old braggart, living out his latest days meanly in England, but in Mrs. Catherwood's hands he develops into a fascinating, ideal hero of romance. We see him in the prelude, a childish exile, imbecile from the horrors and agonies he has endured, championed against the jeers of certain mischievous English urchins by his little compatriot, Mademoiselle Eagle de Ferrier. Taken away to Canada, he grows to manhood, still in some mental darkness, as the adopted son of an Indian chief, who receives a mysterious annuity for the boy's maintenance. His awakening from his long forgetfulness to a suspicion, and then to a knowledge of his identity is very beautifully contrived. He dreams for a while of taking his rightful place in the world, and journeys to Paris, and obtains access to Napoleon's court. But he is surrounded by perils, as well from the usurper's spies as from the emissaries of rival pretenders, and through many thrilling



MRS. CATHERWOOD.

From photo by Harrison, Chicago.

escapes and much disillusion, returns to Canada, and abandoning the desire to regain his kingdom, wins the heart that was loyally denied to him so long as there was a probability of his wearing a crown. The plot is a little too dependent on coincidence. And the temporary imbecility of Lazarre, and the

permanent imbecility of his rival, the spurious dauphin, being necessary, it might have been better to have managed without the witless Johnny Applesseed, and to have avoided the temporary and unessential imbecility of Eagle de Ferrier towards the close. With these qualifications, we can congratulate Mrs. Catherwood on a strong and absorbing romance. The illustrations of M. André Castaigne are excellent.

**MR. HORROCKS: PURSER.** By C. J. Cutcliffe Hyne. 6s. (Methuen.)

Half this volume is occupied with experiences at sea—experiences occasioned more by passengers than by the elements—which Mr. Horrocks, purser, met with, underwent, or took part in. A purser being required to be responsible both for the specie-room and the tempers and comforts of the passengers, the dangers and harassments of Mr. Horrocks' position may, perhaps, be faintly imagined. Mr. Cutcliffe Hyne does better—he describes them, and does it racily and well. We do not believe much in the purser's land-hobby, the orphanage in the Cheshire village, but we believe in his trials and his ability for dealing with them. Moreover, much verisimilitude is gained by the fact that Mr. Horrocks does not meet on every occasion with the full reward of merit. All the stories in the volume are sea-stories, either of the sea or of sea-faring persons; and one of the very best is concerned with our old friend Captain Kettle, who personally conducts a duel he happens to intrude upon. As a provider of unalloyed entertainment, smart and without traces of effort, Mr. Cutcliffe Hyne can hold his own. Mr. Horrocks snaps refreshingly, and manages the passengers and the press with tact and triumph.

**THROUGH THE MISTS.** By Robert James Lees. 6s. (John Long.)

These are supposed to be the autobiographical records of a soul in Paradise, taken down by Mr. Lees. If these records were truth, if a soul could come back and sit by Mr. Lees' table and tell of life after death—straight, unpolished words would suffice; but if this kind of fiction is to be presented to us, it must be done excellently. Mr. Lees gives here his own opinions and ideas, some beautiful conceptions of a Paradise, and some trenchant words on our earthly methods; but it is all rather commonplace, inappropriate, and unconvincing. In places the book reminds one of the "Q's" and "A's" in "A Child's Guide To Knowledge." The Soul asks and asks and asks, and his guide says, "Precisely so," and "Let me explain," and much information follows in didactic style. The roads of this Paradise are each of a distinctive colour (terribly suggestive of the railway-map, to the prosaic mind), the robe of the Soul corresponds to the path he has to take; the messengers or teachers wear "a combination of pink with electric blue"—electric blue! in Paradise!—of course, it is possible. A book of this kind needs "atmosphere," inspiration, an exaltation which is lacking here. Mr. Lees can do better.

**THE LABYRINTH.** By R. Murray Gilchrist. 5s. (Richards.)

Adjectives fail us in an attempt to give readers any adequate idea of the sublimity of this romance. Once we read a tale called "Frangipani," and thought we had reached the pinnacle of magnificence in fiction; but we were wrong. Mr. Murray Gilchrist is recklessly prodigal in the material he uses for his book. Nothing is too expensive, and only expensive things are admitted. Among his folk, the heroine, Judith Swarthmoor, is by no means unique in her great attributes, and thus is she introduced: "He found her endowed with a strange gift of intuition. Although her learning was far removed from pedantry, she could throw fresh light on many subjects which he had long since deemed threadbare. She loved to revel in dreams magnificently coloured; she saw herself as Hebe—filling the veins of gods with living wine. Semele's part was not for her; the embrace of Jove could not have annihilated." The villain, in his own way, is quite as tremendous. Having driven his bride to death, he writes to his friend: "I shall not keep my widowerhood—not I! But I shall court another woman. I'll take her by the throat—by the hair—I'll force her to marry." But, oh, how weak are our quotations as samples of this gorgeous book, where the men and women are all compact of sublime beauty or genius, or are unearthly

monsters, where no one condescends to common sense, where architecture and apparel and manners are all on the profusest scale, where a studious priest may not read in a book, save one studded with precious stones or that had belonged to a French queen, where to gain admittance among the fine company a society lady, turned strolling player for an adventure, has to be "more beautiful and more gifted than Siddons"! Even to enumerate the strange incidents and personages of the story were impossible. Mr. Gilchrist is so boundlessly extravagant that it seems to us a little thing when he throws in a leper for no reason at all, save perhaps to confuse us a little more with an Oriental streak in his eighteenth century Derbyshire medley, a curious wild medley of fine language, murders, mysteries, and god-like virtues, into which, by some strange freak, Mrs. Thrale and Miss Seward have strayed. But in despite of these two personages on an earthly level, Mr. Gilchrist has achieved a veritable triumph, in that he has written three hundred and sixty pages concerning human life and fate through which hardly one single breath of nature blows.

**THE GREAT GOD SUCCESS.** By John Graham. 4s. (Heinemann.)

We confess we began this story with some misgivings lest it should be another bitter plaint of one who had missed the prizes of the world and now railed at the more fortunate. Such plaints have often much justice in them, but are none the less regrettable, since they attack the great god Success in an ineffectual fashion. To flout the deity by showing in a cheerful spirit all that was gained by his neglect is not only more wholesome but more efficacious. But ere we had read fifty pages we had to apologise to Mr. Graham for our doubts, and at the end we acknowledged that in a most vigorous and original manner he has hurled defiance at the god. The story is that of a young American journalist, who begins in a humble position in New York, and arrives at the top of the tree, by dint of undoubted talent, a rare fund of nervous energy, and steady industry. A careless reader will certainly be beguiled into thinking he is reading the story of a strong man, and into admiration for that wonderful machine, the modern press, as it is seen in all its perfection of complexity in New York. Mr. Graham has described it with wonderful exactness, with even wonderful fairness. He has reached his climax, has proved his thesis, by a slow, subtle method, which we do not hesitate to describe as masterly. Howard wins the prizes all along the line, and among them is his wife, the beautiful and cultivated Marian, whose portrait is drawn in the finest of lines. And it is all dust and ashes—though few guess it, and he would cling to all he has gained. For Mr. Graham has clearly proved that energy and concentration and industry and brains do not make a strong man. Howard was essentially weak. He did not dare to be unsuccessful. On the second page, very unobtrusively, the key to his character is given; but to most of us the careful, detailed, moderate record and interpretation of his career in these pages are not superfluous. We congratulate Mr. Graham on an unusually vigorous and dignified study of modern life and character.

**KATE BONNET.** By Frank Stockton. 6s. (Cassell.)

Surely there is not in all fiction such another pirate as Major Bonnet. At the outset, in the beginning of the eighteenth century, he has ended his military career and is a plodding farmer in Barbadoes. Unsuccessful at farming, and wearied of his shrewish second wife, he has yearnings for the unfettered, roving, pillaging life of a pirate. He quietly fits out a ship and gets a rascally crew together, and at length sets sail. But by inadvertence he has aboard with him his faithful old servant, a strictly religious Scot, Ben Greenaway, and through a series of mishaps, his daughter, whom he had intended to take away with him, is *not* on board. Ben remains throughout the death's head at his feast, croaking of the retribution that must overtake him, and constantly seeking to convert him to honesty again. He makes a bad beginning and is embarrassed at capturing a ship officered by an old friend and brother churchwarden of his; but he soon gets over these early qualms and, in spite of Ben's disbelief in his capacity for villainy, develops into an out-and-out pirate. Mr. Stockton has created no more bewitching heroine than sweet Kate Bonnet, who goes in pursuit of her

father hoping to reclaim him. The romance of Kate and her two lovers, her adventures at sea, and those of her doughty champion, Dickory, with, of course, those of Major Bonnet



MR. FRANK R. STOCKTON.

himself, all make most delectable reading. Mr. Stockton may have given us stories that have been more humorous, but he has given us none that has been more characteristically whimsical or fuller of interest.

## The Bookman's Table.

**WEBSTER'S INTERNATIONAL DICTIONARY.** Editors-in-Chief, Noah Porter, D.D., LL.D., and W. T. Harris, Ph.D., LL.D. 40s. net. (Bell and Sons.)

It will be generally acknowledged that the last ten years have been very full of new words. Scientific advance, discoveries and inventions, greater familiarity with other countries, have all contributed to the growth of the English language. Therefore, it is with sincere satisfaction that we welcome this new, revised and enlarged edition of Webster's Dictionary; with its full and accurate vocabulary, its numberless aids to language-learning and pronunciation, its wealth of information, biographical and philological, and its twenty-five thousand word Supplement. In the full sense of the word it is international; and as regards the actual definitions of words, when we say that the traditions of the original Webster have been strictly and intelligently adhered to, we tacitly affirm that they are worthy of the highest praise. Of editors who have laboured to produce this dignified leather volume, there are at least seventy, each a specialist in his own subject; and while giving the high appreciation to the lucid and accurate definitions, we must, at the same time, pay a genuine tribute of praise to the laborious and important task of selection. The volume is truly a monumental piece of work; compact, reliable, well-bound, in a form which will commend it to the most fastidious book-lover, and an educator in itself.

**THE ROAD MENDER.** By Michael Fairless. 2s. 6d. net. (Duckworth.)

There are some books familiar to the eye in slack covers, rather worn at the edges, with a trick of opening at the best places; they do not long retain the freshness of the bookseller's shop—indeed, a new copy surprises a little unpleasantly by reason of its strangeness. Of such books is "The Road Mender." Ruskin would have delighted in this volume of