

need be looked at very closely before it was labelled or catalogued in accordance with the first description.

*Heretics.* By G. K. Chesterton. John Lane Co. 1905.

A heretic, if we go back to etymology, is really only a man who makes a choice. The word acquired its present coloring in the days when those who controlled the thoughts and beliefs of men admitted no power of choice. Not to conform was to be persecuted in this world, and damned in the next. But since nonconformity was in that remote past a sign of exceptional intelligence, however sinfully applied, the modern man who thoughtlessly rejects the fetters of doctrine calls himself a heretic with a silly, deprecating smile, as though the name had not long ago lost all its distinction. If you want to be really distinguished in these days you will be doctrinal. For that you will need all your courage and a rare strength. It has always been the peculiar distinction of Mr. Chesterton's position. He goes forth to war, not for any new-fangled counsel of perfection of freedom of will, but for the good old commonplaces, the fruit of the accumulated wisdom of the ages. Any one can champion a Superman, for his theory will never be put to the test of practice; or the advantages of cosmopolitanism, since we all remain firmly planted in our limited parochial interests and shall so remain. But it takes real eloquence to argue that we had better ignore Irish paganism and keep Christmas, thankful that we have a real live tradition no more vulgar in the fashion of its observance to-day than the Olympian Games were vulgar in the sixth and fifth centuries B. C.

The essential weakness of the present age, as Mr. Chesterton envisages it, is really nothing else than that which distressed Socrates in fifth-century Athens. Everywhere he sees, as Socrates and Plato saw, men trying to secure for themselves and their children something whose good they cannot define.

"The modern man says, 'Away with your old moral formulæ; I am for progress.' This, logically stated, means, 'Let us not settle what is good; but let us settle whether we are getting more of it.' He says, 'Neither in religion nor morality, my friend, lie the hopes of the race, but in education.' This, clearly expressed, means, 'We cannot decide what is good, but let us give it to our children.' I see that the men who killed each other about the orthodoxy of the Homocousion were far more sensible than the people who are quarrelling about the Education Act. For the Christian dogmatists were trying to establish a reign of holiness, and trying to get defined first of all what was really holy. But our modern educationists are trying to bring about a religious liberty without attempting to settle what is religion or what is liberty. If the old priests forced a statement on mankind, at least they previously took some trouble to make it lucid. It has been left for the modern mobs of Anglicans and Non-conformists to persecute for a doctrine without even stating it. . . . I revert to the doctrinal methods of the thirteenth century, inspired by the general hope of getting something done."

Heterodoxy has always meant simply "the other man's doxy," and Mr. Chesterton's heretics are a few distinguished contemporaries who do not agree with him as to fundamentals. First, Mr. Kipling. His peculiar self-deception, says Mr. Chester-

ton, lies in thinking that he is writing for the glory of militarism, when what he really admires is discipline, the sort of organization that is quite as admirable in a department store as in the War Office or a camp. Mr. Kipling, then, if he really knew himself, would see that it would be more logical to stick to the praise of the engine-room or works of irrigation than to exhaust his vocabulary in glorifying the truest possible sign of the decadence of his nation, its militarism, its dependence on armies and the most modern make of gun instead of on the courage of every individual citizen. Another weakness is his cosmopolitanism. He "thinks of England as a place." He knows it "as an intelligent English gentleman knows Venice." But he has not "the patience to become part of anything. . . . And under all this vast illusion of the cosmopolitan planet, with its empires and its Reuter's Agency, the real life of man goes on concerned with this tree or that temple, totally uncomprehended, totally untouched."

But it is Mr. Shaw who is the most perfect type of a self-deluded heretic; an unusual type in that he is thoroughly consistent. In fact, we know what Mr. Shaw will be saying thirty years hence much better than we know what any Cabinet Minister will be saying thirty years hence. His strong point is his readiness to "apply the Shaw test rapidly and rigorously to everything that happens in heaven or earth." His weakness is that he fails to see things as they are because he is blinded by the light of an impossible ideal, the Superman. He has never seen things as they are, because "this secret ideal has withered all the things of this world." "It is not seeing things as they are to imagine a demigod of infinite mental clarity, who may or may not appear in the latter days of the earth, and then to see all men as idiots." For it is the ordinary man, seen as he is, who is really the prodigy, "a wonderful and unnerving matter." Mr. Shaw, asking for a new kind of man, is like a nurse who has tried a rather bitter food for some years on a baby, and, on discovering that it is not suitable, does not throw away the food and demand a new food, but throws away the baby and asks for a new baby. There has been no better or more lucid criticism of Mr. Shaw than these few pages, in which the very man who, in his 'Quintessence of Ibsenism,' forbade men to have ideals, because they would blind them to the particular case, is shown to be unable to see men as they are because he is always comparing humanity with what is not human, a monster from Mars or the Wise Man of the Stoics or the Economic Man of the Fabians.

It is mainly Mr. Shaw's lack of humility that prevents his proper appreciation of man as he is. Mr. H. G. Wells, another heretic, is humble with "the clear personal simplicity of the old world of science." Like Mr. Chesterton, he has come to "the most dreadful conclusion: that a literary man can come to—the conclusion that the ordinary view is the right one." His weakness is common to all who frame Utopias—an indifference to human psychology. In his ideal State he ignores the human soul as Plato ignored it in his 'Republic,' though Plato did not at any rate make the mistake of supposing that pure cosmopolitanism was possible for the race. In the case of Mr. Wells and his philosophy Mr. Chester-

ton again shows his own affinity to the Platonists in a long and careful refutation of Mr. Wells's assertion of a Heraclitean flux. Curious indeed that, after so many battles lost and won in the field of philosophic discussion, it should be possible for a Mr. Wells gravely to repeat the doctrine that All things are in a state of flux, and for a Mr. Chesterton to set himself soberly to prove that "it cannot be true that there is nothing abiding in what we know."

As a critic, not only of heretics but of various aspects and relations of life discussed in this volume, when he has finished off the heretics, Mr. Chesterton shows a definite advance in clearness and force. One fault is thrust on him by his peculiar championship of the doctrinal, an excessive use of those "paradoxes that sit by the springs of truth." One is driven to be startling as well as brave when one is asserting that two and two do not make five. He repeats himself with a fine carelessness, as though, having thought of a good illustration, one could not do better than go on using it; a practice for which there is much to be said in these days when every writer prides himself on a cheap variety of phrase and cannot venture to use so much as the same word twice in a sentence. No one can forecast Mr. Chesterton's future as a critic, and it would not surprise us if it should prove that the true vocation of all this abundant energy is something quite different from setting his contemporaries straight. Meanwhile he knows how to make men stop and look, not at some new and striking theory, like Mr. Shaw (that is easy enough), but at the more settled, more rigid views that are out of date, if perchance they may not, after all, be suited for yet another generation's wear. This is a restful thought at a time when we have been assured by one of the most brilliant of living writers that no truth, no moral generalization, should be allowed to live for more than twenty years. After that it is diseased, decayed, and should be discarded and replaced, which is "progress."

*My Sixty Years on the Plains: Trapping, Trading, and Indian Fighting.* By W. T. Hamilton. New York: Forest and Stream Publishing Co. 1905.

Indian fighting has always been so obvious and facile a field for the sensational newspaper romancer that one picks up anything new on the subject with a justifiable feeling of suspicion. In the narrative of "Bill Hamilton," however, we have a document of real significance. Born in the Cheviot Hills in 1823, the casting vote of his uncle, two years later, turned him with a company of twenty-five men toward America instead of India, to which twelve of the party had wished to go. The family finally settled in St. Louis, where the son received five years of schooling, but suffered seriously from chills and fever, so common a scourge along the river valleys of the Middle West in the early days. In his twentieth year a physician's advice started him over the plains with a party of independent hunters and trappers. The programme called for a year of this life, but the excitement of it fell in too harmoniously with young Hamilton's temperament ever to allow a return to the habits of a more settled civilization. As Indian

fighter, trapper, and trader his years have been spent, and at the advanced age of eighty-three he tells the reader that it is still his habit to spend a portion of each year trapping in the mountains, "thankful that he can still enjoy and appreciate the wonderful beauties of nature."

The alert reader, however, soon discovers that the fundamental motive does not lie in the enjoyment and appreciation of nature as these words are generally understood. Among those of his kind he would probably admit that to his own eyes an Indian's scalp was the fairest flower his hands had ever plucked; and it is as a psychological study of the attitude of the early trappers and traders toward the Indians that the book has its chief value. To Mr. Hamilton the Easterner, or Westerner either, who would halt at scalping a slain Indian or burning a heap of Indian bodies, as a warning to others unfortunately still living, is simply a weakling whose good opinion of his book or its author is not of sufficient importance to warrant concealment of the facts. And as he does not conceal, neither (apparently) does he exaggerate. The good Indian, in his creed, was the Indian whose valuation of his hunting grounds was not high enough to cause him to object to the presence of the paleface with his traps and guns, and who would raise no troublesome question, either of fact or of ethics, over the purchase of a ten-dollar skin for some trinket worth hardly as many cents. Of course, questions of freight and life insurance may fairly be considered to enter prominently into merchandise of this sort, but our author specifically asserts that over \$7,000 worth of marten skins could be carried out of the wilderness on a single pack-horse, and as for danger to life the Indian certainly had the bad end of the bargain. In one chapter we have an amusing description (written in perfect gravity, however), of the versatile mendacity with which "Bill Williams," leader of Mr. Hamilton's party, deluded and defrauded another white trader. As he knew Williams to be "the soul of honor," he ventured to ask for an explanation. "Diplomacy," was the laconic reply. It was sufficient for Mr. Hamilton, and long years of observation have convinced him that honorable merchants in general follow the same tactics.

Mr. Hamilton has nothing but contempt for alleged Indian prowess. The free white trapper could outclass him at every point at which the two came into conflict, and the end of the struggle was predestined from the beginning. The impenetrability of such a mind to any idea of Indian rights as against a white man is complete and unalterable. The believer in such rights has taken himself out of the realm of reality, he would say, and is a negligible quantity; or, to convey the thought in more familiar language, he would call him a d—d fool. From this type of man the Indian of the Western plains and mountains largely formed his idea of the white intruder, and that is why so many names of Indian tribes marked upon the atlases of fifty years ago no longer represent anything more tangible than the mouldering flesh and bones which have gone into the fertilization of the fields of the Western farmer of to-day. We may readily admire Hamilton's energy and resourcefulness, and admit that the harm was done, perhaps irreparably, before

he came upon the scene; but it would be a pretty serious indictment of civilization to hold that there was not at the outset a less bloody possibility—a possibility which would have put energy and resourcefulness into the task of getting civilization into the Indian's heart and brain, rather than that of getting the scalp from his head.

*James Macpherson.* By J. S. Smart. London: David Nutt. 1905.

Voluminous as the literature of Ossianic controversy already is, Mr. Smart has fully justified himself for adding one book more to it. His survey of the subject is in many respects the best we remember to have seen. In a sense, his work contains nothing new, and he does not make for it any claim of originality. The opinions he sets forth about the writings and the puzzling career of James Macpherson rest almost wholly on the investigations of other scholars, to whom full credit is given. But Mr. Smart has mastered the material so well and shown so good a sense of its significance that his book passes out of the class of mere second-hand compilations, and becomes an instructive essay in the literary history of the eighteenth century. It will serve good purpose, we may hope, in disseminating sound doctrine on the subject with which it deals. For although Celtic scholars are now in substantial agreement concerning the nature of Macpherson's Ossianic poems, there is still much misapprehension about them in the minds of others, and Mr. Smart's book will doubtless be read by many who would never consult the notes in J. F. Campbell's 'Leabhar na Feinne,' or find their way to the articles of Dr. Macbain, Professor Stern, and Mr. Alfred Nutt.

So long as Ossianic discussion turned largely on the character and motives of Macpherson and his various friends and sponsors, there was little hope of reaching any satisfactory agreement. Men were too likely to take sides according as they were by temperament adherents of Macpherson or of Dr. Johnson. Still more fruitless were the arguments about the nature of primitive epics and the long patriotic wrangle about the nationality of Ossian, whether he was a Scottish or an Irish Gael. The only secure results, as Mr. Smart shows, have been obtained by comparing Macpherson's productions with the native poetry in mediæval and modern Gaelic, of which a large quantity has become accessible in the last generation. The result of this comparison has been to convince scholars that Macpherson's Gaelic is modern and sometimes bad, and that the metrical form of his pieces is utterly unlike that of the genuine Ossianic poems. Incidental evidence makes it practically certain that his Gaelic version was translated from the English of which it purported to be the original. The English "Ossian," in turn, was only slightly dependent for style or substance on the native ballads, and was about as much the work of Macpherson as 'Paradise Lost' was the work of Milton.

Mr. Smart not only gives an admirable statement of the chief arguments which have led scholars to these conclusions, but he also discusses their wider bearings. It is obvious that, with the English Ossian

thus disposed of, much that has been written about the Celtic genius has ceased to apply. Matthew Arnold's famous essay was not entirely unaffected by the false, or at least one-sided, conception of Celticism to which Macpherson gave rise, and the tradition has been maintained by a series of Anglo-Celtic writers. Mr. Smart comments very sensibly on this tendency, and argues for a truer and more complete characterization of Celtic literature such as has been made easier in recent times by the publication of great numbers of native monuments of every period. His critical observations appear to us to be generally sound. He is also right, in our opinion, in taking issue with some of the ethnological doctrine promulgated by Renan and Arnold in their essays on the Celts.

*Chopin, As Revealed by Extracts from his Diary.* By Count Tarnowski. Translated by Natalie Janotha. Scribners. 1906.

*George Sand et sa fille: d'après leur Correspondance inédite.* Par S. Rocheblave. Paris: Calmann-Lévy.

These two books, of very unequal merit, give us the opposite sides of the miserable quarrel that parted George Sand and Chopin shortly before the composer's death. It is not easy to mete out even justice to the great French novelist, nor does either of these books attain that end; her defender claims too much, her accuser is that and nothing more. After all, the strongest chord of her life was her marvellous power of work and unsparing artistic conscience; its ever pressing spur was the constant necessity of earning money. Who can forget De Goncourt's delightful, if unsympathetic, picture of the eminent authoress at Nohant, finishing a novel at 2:30 A. M., and, without a pause, taking up a fresh sheet to start a new one? That was her life, and in it De Musset, Chopin, even her children Maurice and Solange, were only incidents. That she tired of Chopin, that she got rid of him, that she quarrelled with him, is true; but that she acted as a monster does not in the least follow. In her letters to Solange her consciousness of innocence is transparent. After the return from Majorca, for seven years she was Chopin's nurse, and only his nurse. The post was arduous, for it is beyond question that the Polish composer was of the most fretful and trying temperament. And when the break finally came, it is clear from the letters now printed by M. Rocheblave that it was owing to Chopin's interfering in the matter of the marriage of Solange to the sculptor Clésinger. Chopin was never in the secret of the circumstances that made George Sand, with perfect justification, take up an attitude distinctly hostile to Clésinger; and she, determined to defend the sanctity of her literary laboratory at Nohant, decided to have done with his interference.

Count Tarnowski's book is extremely slight; such new matter of Chopin as it offers is scrappy and not satisfactorily presented; his own comments disclose no extensive knowledge of his subject. On the other hand, M. Rocheblave gives us a skillful piece of bookmaking. The editing is restrained, even to the verge of prudishness. Many of George Sand's letters here given for the first time are well worth