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£2,500,000  
EXTENSION

Trains  
and  
WORK  
AT

ited by E. B. Osborn

NEW FICTION

Novels of India and  
Ireland

By H. E. BATES

As A Man's Hand. By D. M. Southgate  
(Methuen, 7s. 6d.).  
The Rising Tide. By M. J. Farrell (Collins,  
7s. 6d.).

The Harvest is Past. By Michael Home  
(Rice and Cowan, 7s. 6d.).  
Eight Short Stories. By Alec Waugh  
(Cassell, 7s. 6d.).

Good novels of Indian life are scarce. It is a pleasure to record, therefore, that "As A Man's Hand" takes its place beside Mr. C. K. Narayan's "Bachelor of Arts" not only as a first-rate portrait of purely Indian life, as opposed to Anglo-Indian life, but as one of the best novels of the year.

The average novel of Indian life, dealing as it largely does with Europeans making love to other people's wives and Europeans drinking other people's whiskey, succeeds generally in boring one to tears. In Miss Southgate's novel, as in Mr. Narayan's, Europeans have little or no place. More interesting still, European (i.e. Western) psychology has little or no place. The people, their standards, their mode of life, their reactions to emotion, all belong to the East. The book thereby gains immensely, to my mind, in truth and appeal.

India In Transition

It is Miss Southgate's aim to show us India in transition. In order to do this, she has taken three generations of Brahmins: First and principally a young girl, Latchmi, who at seven is married to a gross, elderly and subsequently impotent man she has never seen; her son, Krishna, actually conceived by the most odious religious trickery, who subsequently renounces Brahminism for Christianity; and finally Krishna's daughter, whose ideals of Christian marriage are destroyed by her lover's miserly demands for the usual dowry. Of these people, Latchmi is most important. Through her eyes we see all the terrors of a child marriage system, the fantastic labyrinth of ceremonial and custom and superstition, the cruelty and duplicity and hypocrisy of religious life, the complete and tragic subjection of women, the misery and humiliation following the slightest transgression of the caste rules and the laws of pollution and ablutio.

We see the strict, hypocritical over-fed Brahmin husband, to whom uncleanness is death; we see his frantic desire to have a son ("His soul would be denied entrance into the Abode of Bliss if there were no son to perform the Stradhya ceremony at his death"), and the lengths to which, in his impotency, he will go in order to get one. We are made to feel especially the unspoken terror and bewilderment of a mind, typical of thousands, crushed and brutalised almost from birth by the tyranny of religious discipline.

All this is portrayed in a style absolutely right in its simplicity and gravity. The tone of the book is quiet; the undertones rumble with power. The style seems gentle and at times almost apologetic in its tender simplicity; underneath it the currents of emotion swell strongly and movingly. Similarly, the book is quite short; but in it, somehow, Miss Southgate has managed to compress the sufferings of a nation.

Irish Edwardians

In "THE RISING TIDE" we are also given the history of a family in transition. Here India is replaced by Ireland; the Eastern gods for the Western gods, equally powerful and equally stupid; the rules of religious caste for the rules of social caste; the high-caste Brahmins for the high-caste Edwardians. Miss Southgate's grave, almost Biblical style is replaced in turn by a style intelligent, witty and sophisticated, but also, like hers, the right medium for its subject. We see here the family of McGrath, of whom Lady Charlotte is the figurehead. She is surrounded by her daughters, who are brought up to respect tradition and honour and their great house, Garcones. In Cynthia, her daughter-in-law, arrives the voice of a new generation, and it is in the portrait of this impulsive, dominant, selfish and yet beautiful creature that Miss Farrell has expended the best of her amusing and lively talent. It is the clash of house against the two women, Lady Charlotte and Cynthia, and the defeat of both which give her an opportunity also of showing her capacity for handling tragedy. She has, in fact, many virtues, and good though this book is, I see it as the forerunner of something even better.

String Round Their Knees

"THE HARVEST IS PAST" belongs to that prosaic, honest East Anglian tradition which finds its best exponent in Mr. H. W. Freeman. I see all of this East Anglian group of novelists, in fact, as men with string tied round the knees of their trousers: honest, stolid, trustworthy workmen doing a good job of work and be damned to everybody. Modern movements in writing, outside influences of style and thought, do not touch them. They write as uninspiringly as though they were local journalists reporting the meetings of pig clubs, and yet somehow, by their very honesty, they succeed in getting over.

This is especially true of Mr. Home, whose characters seem to be compounded of clippings from the local weekly stuck together with lumps of clay. The word local is written all over his book, and yet his central character, Wake Sayer, the vicarage gardener, who takes a farm and pours into it all his passionate love and knowledge of the land, and is burdened with a wretched wife and a good-for-nothing son, lives and impresses one as a universal figure. This is a book which it is easy to despise on page 1, to like on page 50, and to be utterly absorbed in by page 100.

Mr. Waugh's stories are typical of Mr. Waugh. That is to say, they belong to that style of writing which, as I have remarked before, begins with a great flourish of illustrations on the front pages of fashionable magazines and ends up among the advertisements for baked beans and col-blankets. They are all engaging and facile.

"MILK PROVERBS" by W. Clinie Harvey and Harry Hill (H. K. Lewis, 16s.), is a valuable, concise text-book, dealing with everything into which milk can be turned, from ice-cream to wool, cheese to Keffir, Koumiss, and the now popular and delicious Yoghourt.

The Great Western railway yesterday closed the construction track from North Acton to a distance of more than 2 miles. The new line will probably be completed in 1913. The programme of widening of the line between North Acton and Denham is trifling in comparison with the new line over the new Board's trial London line, thus the direct rail route from West End and the North Acton to the Ealing and Western lines, and the Great Western at Greenford.

STATIONS

The stations to be built will be: Hanger Lane.—Station at the junction of Hanger Lane and Hanger Lane. Perivale.—A platform will be situated at the junction of Hanger Lane and the Great Western line. Greenford.—A platform will be built east of the station. An escalator will be provided. Northolt.—To provide for the removal of the existing station buildings. South Ruislip.—A platform will be built at the junction of the Great Western and Eastern lines; the platform will be on the south side of the line. Ruislip Gardens.—The station buildings will be enlarged. Ruislip and West Ruislip.—The station buildings will be arranged to serve steam services. The car depot at Ruislip and West Ruislip will be enlarged.

WEST

When the scheme for the Central London Railway Station at Acton has been completed, the Tube service from Acton to Hanger Lane will be extended to North Acton. The new line will be built at a cost of £12 million. The service will be operated by the Metropolitan Railway. The new line will be built at a cost of £12 million. The service will be operated by the Metropolitan Railway.

The death is announced of Walter Graef, Vice-President of the Royal Society.

New Gramof

Memo

ONE is apt to think that gramophone records are a mere entertainment and that others have no other value. First and foremost—and of all time for that matter—full recording by Coronation. This, been mentioned in playing it through cannot cease to be an excellence of the from the occasions deeper bass notes and choral, comes of the actual broad words live again. of making these truly should we a album will remain lucky enough to be by the King's Industrial Welfare Next among the of the season to Aldershot Tattoo, we have a selection of which to kindle occasion.

TOP

Then, on a different note, the Toscanini concert. Though none of direct, we can refer to great maestro by of Toscanini in a major work—the H.M.V. have put skill, never issuing over-amplification colour, or other times beset the di and the Lohengrin York Philharmonic in point. The first and the best second are exciting. There is a new Arthur Schnitzler Nocturnes, a new ing the attention true musicianship. Op. 15 No. 2 put again in the G major seems to note the here in the carmine in the noble piece recording is full which a while ago of the piano discs.

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