

short of horrible; and this without the employment of one exaggerated epithet. The leaders of science and research in England assemble to greet the profoundly interesting arrivals; and they see the lid of the cylinder slowly unscrewing itself from within. Then the creatures emerge. They are not men at all, not anything remotely resembling man: they are brains surrounded by tentacles—more like an octopus in appearance than anything of which we are aware. They are deadly and ruthless intelligences—bisexual. "A small Martian arrived on the scenes during their stay on the earth—it was budded off!"

They are so probable, so scientifically likely, these creatures, that one falls to speculating what the social conditions of their existence might be. Could they love? Or were they utterly selfish? Had they souls? Or were they nothing but mind? Unfortunately for us, the nature of things prevents the solution of any of these fascinating speculations: for the Martians, so far from having the least wish to establish communications with the inhabitants of the earth, never even considered the possibility of such a thing, any more than we might seek to conciliate the rats that infested a house of which we wished to take possession. They killed by deadly scientific methods all who opposed them, and caught others, whose blood they injected into their own veins—their method of obtaining nourishment.

One feels, in every nerve, the deadly awfulness of the panic terror which seized the world. The utter helplessness of humanity against an entirely unexpected and unknown danger. The Martians, totally undeterred by troops or artillery, advance on London. Then the stampede begins. To us, who know every inch of the Great North Road, past Whetstone, and through Barnet, the account of that wild flight is almost too real. It is horror of a most subtle kind—that takes the breath and lifts the hair. One sees before one's very eyes the panting, helpless, frantic, miscellaneous multitude, pursued by fiends, pouring in a stream of steady heroism, or base, blind fear, or mad brutality, along the road, anywhere, out of reach of the ghastly fate behind. I am told, by-the-bye, that Mr. Wells makes one mistake: he seriously underrates the power of modern artillery, both as to range and precision. Be that as it may, it makes you feel the complete helplessness of the human being against the wielders of the Heat Ray and the Black Smoke. And now, having got these beings here, the problem he has to solve is to get rid of them again; and this is the final touch of mastery of his subject. You have no idea what will happen, but directly you read his solution of the difficulty you feel not only that it might have happened, but, definitely, that it *must* have happened. I shall not spoil the story by revealing it here.

It is impossible to say half one would like to in the limits of a review. The book is, in its peculiar way, a triumph. Every detail is convincing; and, long after reading, it lingers in the mind, with a baleful suggestion hovering in the background—What if such a thing were really to happen, after all? G. M. R.

"Poems and Songs."

I HAVE read with pleasure "Poems and Songs," by Mr. W. E. Brockbank, published by Messrs. T. Fisher Unwin, of 11, Paternoster Buildings, E.C. It is quite evident that Mr. Brockbank has the "poet's

heart" which he ascribes to the hero of one of his own poems, a poem which, by the way, is quite one of the best of the collection, and which deserves to be widely known. No one but one who is essentially a poet could have told a story so graphic, so true to life, and withal so musical, and satisfying to the artistic sense, as that which the author puts into the mouth of "Father Sebastian."

Many of the poems, indeed, quite the larger number of them, treat of love, and one gets a little weary of the subject after a while, more especially as the love portrayed is certainly not of the highest kind. To my mind it is for the most part a mere temporary and animal satisfaction in physical beauty rather than the abiding, self-sacrificing affection of those whose souls are akin. But with this one criticism, which is evoked by the desire that in further works the poet should discuss subjects more worthy of the ability with which he unquestionably treats them, I heartily add my warm tribute of praise to the commendation which I have no doubt will be widely accorded to the book.

That Mr. Brockbank is a lover of nature, and is intimately acquainted with her in some of her most beautiful aspects is quite evident. The little poem, "A Mountain Path," is testimony to this. No one who had not lived in a mountainous country and become penetrated with its sublime beauty, no one, moreover, who did not possess the descriptive faculty and the power of giving utterance to his thoughts in poetical and melodious language, could have written the lines which I quote below:—

"I know a gorge between two rocky hills
Whereon the brackens in the Autumn turn
From green to gold, from gold to vivid red,
And in the turning, all these colours blent,
Enframe the purple of the shadowing rocks.
There leaps a torrent, cold and crystal clear,
'Twi'x't ferny banks and boulders down the gorge
In white cascades and diamond-flashing streams,
Swift onward from its birthplace in the rocks
'Neath the cleft summit where the hills divide,
To reach the valley sloping to the sea;
And as it goes, the gladness of its voice,
The music and the murmur of its life,
Fills all the air with sweetly woven sounds—
One happy song, changeless in endless change."

As one reads this in the "centre of the universe" the hubbub ceases, the sound of the grinding organs becomes muffled, and the street cries are only a shadowy remembrance. One is momentarily transported to the cool, clear atmosphere of a mountain defile, and revels, in contemplation, in the bracken-clad hills, with their gorgeous wealth of colouring.

Want of space prevents my making more quotations, but I heartily commend the book to the readers of the NURSING RECORD.

M. B.

WHAT TO READ.

"The Vintage: a Romance of the Greek War of Independence." By E. F. Benson.

"France." By John Edward Courtenay Bodley.

"The Son of the Czar (Peter the Great)." By James M. Graham.

"Old Times in Middle Georgia." By R. M. Johnston.

"In Joyful Russia." By John A. Logan, Junr.

"The Tragedy of the Korosko." By A. Conan Doyle.

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