

and buy, strong and useful, faithful and honest. Come and buy.' The day of sacrifice was past, and the richer pilgrims in their brightest robes gathered round. One among them singled out the girl. They entered a booth together. The mother was left behind. One word she uttered, or was it a moan of inarticulate grief? I know not, but it seemed to me a cry of a broken heart. The girl came back. The dealer, when the bargaining was over, said to the purchaser: 'I sell to you this property of mine, the female slave Narcissus, for the sum of £40.' 'And I,' replied the pilgrim, 'agree to pay you £40 for your property, Narcissus.' The bargain was clinched. This time the mother's despair was voiceless. It meant to stay with her always; she had need of brighter companionship, I thought."

A third edition has just been issued of "A Budget of Anecdotes. Collected and arranged by Mr. George Seton, Advocate." Many of the stories relate to the "North COUNTRY," where, in spite of a silly belief to the contrary, there is very much genuine wit and humour. Here is an example of Scottish caution:—

A Blairgowrie man had married a native of Kirkcaldy. Some years later, when the woman was dying, she said to her husband, "John, I've been a good wife to you, and I want you to do me a favour." "Weel, 'oman, what is it?" "Weel, John, it's jist this, that ye'll bury me among my ain folk at Kirkcaldy." "Hoots, 'oman, it canna be; I tell you it canna be." "Weel, John, if ye dinna tak' me to Kirkcaldy I'll haunt ye; my speerit 'ill haunt ye." "Aweel, if it comes to that, 'oman, I'll hae to do it; but I'll try ye in Blairgowrie first."

## A Book of the Week.

### THE CONFESSIONS OF A WIFE.\*

No reviewer could pass over this book in silence, in spite of its glaring faults of taste and style, which greet us on the very threshold. The heroine is a young lady whose nationality impels her to spell "theatre" theater, "offence" offense, and, most discouraging of all, "mould" mold. Her grammatical susceptibilities also allow of her saying, with regard to her lover's possible coming—"I didn't know but he would."

This young lady, Marna Trent, being, these peculiarities notwithstanding, a young lady of the most exclusive breeding—a Governor's daughter—and being, so far as appears, without friends, relations, or guardians, except her father, who is old and apparently somewhat infirm, appears to pass her time in flirtations with the said father's secretaries. She refuses Robert Hazelton, the plain one; but Dana Herwin, the handsome one, will not take "No" for an answer. As might have been expected from her antecedents, Miss Marna, having once fallen in love, troubles not a moment about such trifles as the family, character, or religious beliefs of her lover. It is the "Trust me all in all or not at all" with a vengeance! Dana Herwin appears to be a kind of Melchizedek, without father, mother, or descent; and, as subsequently appears, without a good many other things too.

The stormy wooing of the flighty girl is excellently

\* By Mary Adams. Grant Richards,

done, vivid and strenuous; and no doubt the complete surrender, when once a wife, is true to life. Marna, from being a hard mistress, becomes an almost abjectly adoring wife, and one hardly wonders that Dana grew bored after a while. She has one habit which must have been particularly annoying to a young man who has been very healthily in love and is in the process of getting over it—she writes him letters and leaves them on his pillow or his pin-cushion. His tenderness wears thin somewhat quickly under this treatment, and before the birth of her first child he seems to have found her company a little fatiguing. Tears by no means bring about repentance; as Marna remarks:—

"Masculine tenderness is said to respond to tears. I do not find it so. Rather I should say that a man's devotion fades under salt water, like a bathing-suit, proving unserviceable in the very element for which it is supposed to be adapted."

In another place she writes:—

"This paragraph is quite superfluous; I believe women are superfluous by nature."

But now, down upon the young wife's life, comes the shadow of real trouble. A something—something indescribable, which seems to be driving her and her husband apart. The climax comes when he accepts a foreign consulate whither she and the child cannot accompany him; and the time goes on, and he does not come back, and his letters are forced and artificial, and everybody wonders, and at last a wild fear breaks upon her that she has been deserted.

Through this time of stress, she has a constant friend, Robert Hazelton, the doctor, the man whose love she refused, and who is, of course, a far finer fellow than the handsome Dana.

By the means of this good man, the husband and wife are reconciled, but to tell what was the mysterious cause of Dana's conduct would be to betray the secret of the book.

Full of crudities, and with passages that strike one unpleasantly, it is still a book to read. There are vivid bits of observation here and there, and the phases of the girl's mind, until she emerges at the end matured into a fine woman, and no longer a wayward, self-centred child, are drawn with real power.

G. M. R.

## What to Read.

"Queen Victoria. A Biography." By Sidney Lee.

"The Book of Joyous Children." By James Whitcomb Riley.

"Lazarus at Our Gate." By Alex. Anderson, M.A.

"The Private Soldier under Washington." By Charles Knowles Bolton.

"Tolstoy as Man and Artist, with an Essay on Dostoevsky." Translated from the Russian of Dmitri Merejkowski.

"The Splendid Idle Forties: Stories of Old California." By Gertrude Atherton.

"In Chaucer's Maytime." By Emily Richings.

"The Lord Protector." By S. Levett Yeats.

"The Lost Parson, and other Poems." By John A. Bridges.

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