

Book of the Week.

JOHN GOODCHILD.*

Mr. Henderson has the true gift of a story teller, a real "raconteur." Out of the simple every-day happenings in an ordinary life, he has woven a story of real interest. There is nothing sensational or unnatural in the whole volume, and yet there are few readers, we venture to say, who would willingly lay aside the book unfinished.

John Goodchild tells his own life story. "We can judge our fellow-men by their acts, and their acts only, there is no other test. So in telling my story, I will strive to set down truly and without passion events as they happened years ago, neither seeking favour or excuse myself, nor laying to the charge of others any but the things they did." John's recollections, vague and intermittent, begin at a very early age. His father, a retired Naval officer, possessed in common apparently with the rest of the Goodchild family what might be termed a "difficult" disposition. Taking offence easily, and hard to conciliate. A just man, in so far as a prejudiced man can ever be just. The elder of two sons, having offended his father by his marriage, he finds himself at his father's death, left with the entailed property only, everything not entailed and most of the old man's money going to the younger son, Robert. As is too often the case, a dispute arose over the will and the disposition of part of the property. For years the brothers did not meet after this, Robert living in London, a successful solicitor, the Squire living at the Park with his two sons, Tom and John, and one little daughter, Moll. Through the mere chance of meeting at a neighbour's funeral, the brothers agree to bury the hatchet. Robert showing a strong interest in the Squire's youngest son, having weight with the elder man.

We follow John through his delicate boyhood different in that, as in all else, to his brother Tom, a sturdy youth, and somewhat of a bully, who eventually goes into the Army. John's intellectual powers are, however, great. He makes great progress in his studies under Mr. Owen, his tutor, a wise man, with great strength of character as well as much-needed tact. John is to go to Oxford when an unlucky quarrel with his brother, in which both are to blame, brings on him the wrath of his father. "You were to have gone to Oxford, but you have proved yourself unfit to mix with men of honour; I cannot let you go." Hot words on both sides pass, and that night, wounded in the feelings past bearing, John leaves his father's house to seek his fortunes in London. Not the London of to-day, for the period is pre and early Victorian, when all England was divided against itself on the subject of the first railways. The Squire and his brother are once more at enmity, having quarrelled over a proposed line of rail in the Squire's county; he vehemently opposing the innovation, the astuter business head of Robert realising the immense benefit to the whole country that the railway would be. So Robert knows nothing of his nephew's presence in London

* By R. W. Wright Henderson. (John Murray.)

for months after he came there, struggling for a living. Then again, a mere chance throws them together. The description of John's journey to London, partly by road, partly on a canal barge, is vividly described. His uncle, always attached to him, stands his very good friend, treats him as a son, making his path in life easy for him. Robert Goodchild is perhaps the most attractive personality in the book. Small wonder that John is devoted to him.

There is much that is lovable in John, but his pride and want of tact often lead him to attempt to help people in the wrong way, keeping silence when a few words might have put matters right. The female element enters little into the book. Lady Wingate, the wife of a neighbouring landowner, is a charming woman, and John's very good friend from the days of his early motherless childhood.

There is not a word in the book one would wish unwritten.

E. L. H.

SUNKEN GOLD.

In dim green depths rot ingot-laden ships;
And gold doubloons, that from the drowned hand
fell,
Lie nestled in the ocean-flower's bell
With love's old gifts, once kissed by long-drowned
lips.
And round some wrought gold cup the sea-grass
whips,
And hides lost pearls, near pearls still in their
shell,
Where seaweed forests fill each ocean dell
And seek dim twilight with their restless tips.
So lie the wasted gifts, the long-lost hopes,
Beneath the now hushed surface of myself,
In lonelier depths than where the diver gropes;
They lie deep, deep; but I at times behold
In doubtful glimpses, on some reefy shelf,
The gleam of irrecoverable gold.

EUGENE LEE HAMILTON.

COMING EVENTS.

October 1st.—Catholic Nurses' Association Meeting, the Visitation Convent, Harrow-on-the-Hill.

October 2nd.—Nurses' Missionary League. Farewell meeting, University Hall, Gordon Square, W.C.

October 4th.—London Medical Exhibition opens, Royal Agricultural Hall.

October 7th.—Territorial Force Nursing Service. Meeting Executive Committee, Mansion House, 3 p.m. Reception by Lady Mayoress of members of the Service, 4 to 6 p.m.; music, tea and coffee.

October 8th.—Society for the State Registration of Trained Nurses. Meeting of the Executive Committee, 431, Oxford Street, London, W., 4 p.m.

October 9th.—The Princess of Wales receives Jubilee Purses at the National Hospital for the Paralysed and Epileptic, Queen Square, W.C., 3.15 p.m.

October 18th to 22nd.—Conference, National Union of Women Workers, Portsmouth.

October 22nd.—Meeting of the National Council of Nurses of Great Britain and Ireland, 4 p.m.

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