

all such cases, is not always infallible, and is apt to change with varying circumstances. Some books which, upon their first appearance have excited little or no interest, have afterwards come to be regarded with no little favor, and their full beauty and real worth seen and appreciated. The most remarkable instance of this that occurs to us is Dickens' "Pickwick Papers," which were by no means successful at first, and yet, few there are now who are not acquainted with the amiable Pickwick's adventures, and who do not feel a friendly interest in 'Samivel' Weller. On the other hand, many works of fiction have met with immediate and astonishing success, but their popularity has been short-lived, and they have sunk into an oblivion from which they are not likely to emerge. Now, although we cannot of course speak with any degree of certainty, we cannot but think that Mr. Haggard's "She" bids fair to be classed in this category. Even now the interest felt in it is rapidly waning, and it is more than likely that its notoriety will be very transitory indeed.

Mr. Haggard proceeds to ride rough shod over our modern American novelists in a manner that must wound these gentle men's sensibilities very much, if they are at all sensitive to literary criticism. He quotes them as saying that there are no stories left to be told, and then tells us that their works clearly show the truth of the statement, at least as regards themselves. Mr. Haggard kindly informs us that our novelists have developed a new style of romance; that their heroines are things of silk and cambric, who soliloquize and dissect their petty feelings and elaborately review the feeble promptings which serve them for passions. Their heroes, to Mr. Haggard's discriminating perceptions, are not a whit better, and are evidently fitted for nothing but to dangle around the heroines and pass away their time in frivolous amusements. Now, it is difficult to understand how a man of Mr. Haggard's knowledge can make such bold statements, and expect for a single instant that they will be believed. Granted that there are a few American novelists who do produce such works as he has described, has he any right to class the works of our best writers with those abortive attempts? Mr. Haggard seems to think that if a novel is produced by an American it is not worth the paper upon which it is written. Not only this, but he proceeds to compare them with the works of Swift, Fielding and Thackeray. Why does he not institute a comparison between the modern American novels and the modern English novels? Mr. Haggard, we imagine, is too shrewd not to see that the English novelists would suffer by the comparison, so he therefore has recourse to some of the best English writers of the preceding ages. True, he has been kind enough to class Nathaniel Hawthorne with Swift, Fielding and Thackeray, and for that condescension we are thankful, but we are grieved to see a gentleman of Mr. Haggard's ability display such a remarkable ignorance of what is produced in our *unfortunate* country.

Then there is a second school of fiction, the Naturalistic, at the head of which is Zola. With all that Mr. Haggard has to say regarding this detestable school, we heartily agree. He is severe in his criticism of it, but he is deservedly so, and he has certainly shown up the writers of this class in a manner which they richly deserve. If Zola, notwithstanding his protestations to the contrary, chooses to exert a baneful influence upon those of his readers who are weak enough to be influenced by him, he ought to be censured with unsparing severity by those who have a love for what is good, pure and beautiful, and Mr. Haggard has not failed to exert all his scorn against the upholders of this wretched system.

Our author now comes to the third great school of fiction, which he classes as that devoted to the Young Person. He complains against the restrictions of this school with

amusing petulance. Mr. Haggard thinks it hard that fiction should be judged by the standard of fitness for young girls of sixteen to read. He seems to think that this evil, as he evidently considers it, is confined solely to England, and he being an Englishman himself, it is perhaps for that very reason he finds it so hard to put up with.

He asks why it is that men scarcely ever read a novel, and then tells us that in a great majority of cases it is because it presents no true picture of life and manners, but is a weak, rapid collection of absurdities. Now, in view of this fact Mr. Haggard's most celebrated novel can certainly not come under the first class, and also that one or two of his other works *might* be classed in the second, we are a little at a loss where to place him in the literary field. Does he think that "She" is a realistic piece of life? No, we have his express statement that he does not so consider it. Then perhaps he is severe upon himself and, recognizing the demand which he thinks is made upon all writers of fiction, he has catered to this demand in order to attain a certain degree of success. The question is too difficult for us to answer, and we must live in the hope that perhaps Mr. Haggard may see fit to throw some light upon it.

Mr. Matthew Arnold's recent "Estimate" of General Grant and his "memoirs" is but another illustration of that tendency so frequently manifested among men who have secured an acknowledged place in literature, to censure, in the writings of others, anything that does not come up to their standard of excellence. It must be acknowledged that if any one is capable of applying correct rules of criticism to literary productions, that man is Mr. Arnold; but in the present instance we think he has presumed too much upon his own judgment and prestige, and has stated his views as though he never anticipated that an exception would ever be taken to his expressed opinions. Notwithstanding Mr. Arnold's evident belief in his own infallibility, we cannot but think that he has been not only careless, but unjust, in his strictures upon the General's work. He does not take into consideration the fact that Gen. Grant produced this admirable work under conditions when even Mr. Arnold, he it said, would probably never have been able to perform any work of any quality whatever, not to mention a work of such dimensions as the one in question. Mr. Arnold proceeds to make his criticism as though the General had set to work under the best possible circumstances, and had had ample time to make his revisions, pay attention to the style, form, and grammatical accuracy of his sentences, instead of being obliged to devote all of his time to the matter and no time to its artistic arrangement.

One of the most important objections which Mr. Arnold makes is that the General's English is not "high bred," frequently giving evidence of the fact that the General was not so conversant as might be with the commonest rules of grammar. It is somewhat amusing to note that in criticising this feature of Gen. Grant's style Mr. Arnold makes far greater mistakes in the same particular than those upon which he sits in judgment. Mr. Arnold's profuse display of pronouns without any discernible antecedents is rather bewildering to one who is not a master of syntax, and yet we think that Mr. Arnold might have condescended to clothe his thoughts in plainer English than here used, in order that his less learned readers should be able to understand him.

Then again, the uncompromising way in which Mr. Arnold judges of Grant's work by the standard of British approval is, to the patriotic American, somewhat exasperating, to say the least. We are pleasantly informed at the conclusion of Mr. Arnold's not very creditable performance that "no doubt