

REVIEWS.

REWARDS AND FAIRIES.

"Rewards and Fairies." By Rudyard Kipling. With Illustrations by Frank Craig. London: Macmillan. 1910. 6s.

MR. KIPLING takes the title of his new book from "The Fairies' Farewell" of Richard Corbet, that jolly prelate who is the subject of some of Aubrey's most re-readable pages. Mr. Kipling does well not to quote any of the verses of this singularly English poem, beginning

"Farewell rewards and fairies!
Good housewives now may say;
For now foule sluts in dairies
Doe fare as well as they;
And though they sweep their hearths no less
Than mayds were wont to doe,
Yet who of late for cleanliness
Finds sixe-pence in her shoe?"

Had he printed this or the verse ending with

"When Tom came home from labour
Or Ciss to milking rose,
Then merrily went their tabour,
And nimble went their toes"—

He could scarce have expected the usual recognition of his own diminished verses, here to be found, as before, one at the beginning and one at the end of each tale. There are eleven tales, and in all of them reappear Dan and Una and Puck of Pook's Hill. The children, though a year older, serve as well for an immediate excuse to Mr. Kipling to tell his tales of the past. The children go out to see an otter or meet a woodman, and Puck appears, and straightway they begin to talk with Queen Elizabeth or another; or Puck does the talking while the children see and hear. If this be well done, then the end of Corbet's poem may be changed and Mr. Kipling's name substituted for William Churn's:

"To William all give audience,
And pray yee for his noddle,
For all the fairies' evidence
Were lost, if it were addle".

But probably this change will be approved only by readers so much under the spell of Mr. Kipling's power and reputation as to accept everything with awestricken gratitude. Nor is the temptation to do this very slight. His manner is the same; if anything, it is stronger. This is the very voice that resounded in the best tales. The style, as of old, is a mixture of Bible, Ballad and Cockney English. Here are the same harsh strength and melting softness. The invention is excellent. An old mason of Henry the Seventh's time comes into the village builder's shop while the boy Dan is there, and tells how he saved the King a few pounds and was knighted for it. A Neolithic man, the first of the Down men to get an iron knife, describes how the wolves fled and men bowed down to him. A knight of Henry the First relates the story of a King's hunting, where the Saxon beaters nearly revolted because of an old weak man who, being brought before the King, turns out to be Harold the son of Godwin.

The machinery of Puck and the children is tiresome and unnecessary. Sometimes, it is true, one of the children bears a considerable part in the tale; but as a rule they are only a pretext, and after each introduction we are more and more disturbed by the perfunctory use of Puck's magic to call spirits from the vasty deep of Mr. Kipling's historical knowledge. We soon cease, as a matter of course, to expect illusion, but by this childish artifice are prevented from taking the fictions entirely on their merits. We know that it is Mr. Kipling's tender heart which says "So the three sat down, cheek by wet cheek, telling over their farewells till morning light"; then why attribute it to Puck? Puck, it seems, took away the children's memory of all

their walks and conversations with people of the past; so each time Mr. Kipling has to meet this difficulty and tell us, e.g., that a second after Queen Elizabeth has left them Dan was doing just as he was doing before she came and Una saying "There wasn't anyone in the Shaw after all". This difficulty must have been created in order to explain how their experiences, though extraordinary, did not trouble the children. He does not mind an incredible invention, but it must not spoil or interfere with everyday life. His penalty is the reader's incredulity at so many points that it is hard to do the writer justice.

As to the tales themselves, abstracted as far as possible from their setting, they are full of incident, costume, etc., and of dialogue—Mr. Kipling is never afraid of dialogue. But we suspect that they are an outcome of the modern desire to make history interesting and "real". They are thoroughly well galvanised; Mr. Kipling's stirring manner and private opinions are all over them; but they have not begun to live. He cannot quite bring Elizabeth before us, calling herself "Harry's daughter", or taking off her cloak and dancing before the children, or saying that dancing "gives a woman alone among men or her enemies time to think how she shall win or—lose. A woman can only work in man's playtime. Heigho!"—or the master mason at the point of death by his enemy's knife telling that enemy a tale: "I believed it to be the last tale I'd ever tell top of mortal earth, and I would not put out bad work before I left the lodge. All art's one art, as I said. My Spirits, d'you see, were caught up in a high, solemn exaltation, and I saw all earth's vanities foreshortened and little, laid out below me like a town from a cathedral scaffolding"—or the Neolithic man, who knows as much anthropology as Mr. Kipling, saying: "As we walked over the grass my Mother's brother—the Chief on the Man's Side—he took off his Chief's necklace of yellow sea-stones . . ." What is fatal is that it is nearly always possible, if not compulsory, to see, quite distinct from one another, Mr. Kipling's subject and his treatment. Hence, with all the stridency and bustle, there is little life.

Of the poems, one or two are vigorous in Mr. Kipling's usual clear-cut archaic manner and iron sentimentousness, but he frequently spoils his effects by a mysterious kind of nonsense peculiarly his own. The first verse of "A Charm", for example, seems to be pure nonsense:

"Take of English earth as much
As either hand may rightly clutch.
In the taking of it breathe
Prayer for all who lie beneath—
Not the great nor well bespoke,
But the mere uncounted folk
Of whose life and death is none
Report or lamentation—
Lay that earth upon thy heart,
And thy sickness shall depart".

This will be accepted by those who know that Mr. Kipling is a downright strong man and no long-haired poet, whereas if a real poem superficially resembling this had been put before them with no recommendation it would count as nonsense. Again, to show "how very little since things was made Things have altered in the shipwright's trade", he has a set of verses where an old stranger comes to Blackwall Basin and shows the men that he knows their trade as well as they; and, asked his name, he replies:

"It might be Japhet, it might be Shem,
Or it might be Ham (though his skin was dark),
Whereas it is Noah, commanding the Ark".

Just so, the old man learned in bricklaying replies:

"It might be Lot or Methusalem,
Or it might be Moses (a name I hate),
Whereas it is Pharaoh, surnamed the Great".

Another case is "A St. Helena Lullaby", where, as so often in Mr. Kipling's poems, we have no idea who is supposed to be speaking. Added to this there are

many words used simply to fill up the line, as, for example, the last half of

"The South across the water underneath a setting star",

said of S. Helena. And in "Philadelphia" what is the meaning of the words "Never say I didn't give you warning"? and who speaks them? There are numerous other absurdities which we can only suppose are due to the jig and rant of his verse getting into Mr. Kipling's head to the detriment of his reason; but they are also absurdities inseparable from his manner and in several cases closely interwoven throughout the whole of a poem. We should suggest the substitution of "Hey derry down", or "Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese", or "With my dumble dum dollykin dumble dum day", or some other cheerful nonsense which has no affectation of mystery any more than of sense about it.

HEINRICH HEINE.

"Heinrich Heine's Memoirs." Edited by Gustav Karpeles. Translated by Gilbert Cannan. London: Heinemann. 1910. 12s. net.

I HAVE, however, been compelled", Heine tells us in his introduction, "partly from tiresome family considerations, and partly from religious scruples, almost by one half to destroy these notes to which I have complacently given the title of 'Memoirs'." Of these "Memoirs" only the merest fragment has survived. This fragment, together with a larger quantity of correspondence collected and edited by Herr Gustav Karpeles, is now done into very tolerable English by Mr. Gilbert Cannan and published under the title of "Heinrich Heine's Memoirs". The title will pass; for the autobiography read with the letters chronologically arranged does give a more or less consecutive history of Heine as written by himself. Herr Karpeles is the best of editors, entirely unobtrusive, simply throwing the letters together. He takes it for granted that the reader of these memoirs will know something of Heine's life, and he does not insert troublesome editorial explanations of how this letter or that came to be written. Altogether this is a book to publish. Heine, being the German who least needs translating, is extremely easy to translate. Mr. Cannan's is a grateful task. The singing quality of Heine's prose can with care and taste be brought right out in the English, and none of his characteristic refinements need be lost. As for the lyrics with which the memoirs and letters are, like the "Reisebilder", thickly sown—well, that is another matter.

Heine is not the typical autobiographer. He does not write autobiography because he likes to talk about himself, or because he has that queer love of self-revelation characteristic of so many men of his century. He wrote of himself because he knew he was a good literary subject. Marie Bashkirtsev once said of sincere autobiography that it should be written for publication, but written as if no one in the world but the writer were going to see it. Heine wrote his fragment of autobiography as he wrote the "Reisebilder"—more concerned with literary finish and the display of his characteristic literary gifts than with any idea of telling the literal truth about himself. He wrote with the idea that all the world was going to see it, and with the intention that all the world should admire. Rousseau wrote of himself because he knew he was different from other men. Heine wrote of himself because it gave him an opportunity to write generally of people and things in an intimate and personal manner. If he destroyed a portion of his memoirs we are sure it was not from "tiresome family considerations" or from "religious scruples", but because they were not so well written or so interesting as the portion he retained. Even his private letters are letters of an incorrigible littérateur. Heine was not the man to forget that, even in the intimacy of his personal correspondence, possibly he was writing for the world. He did not, of course, write his letters with an ear consciously given to the audience

that might hereafter hear what he had to say. But he had the instinct of the born writer to write nothing he would fear to be printed and appraised on its simple literary merits. "I am angry with you", he wrote to his wife in December 1843, "and when I arrive I shall only give you five hundred kisses instead of a thousand." There is no missing the literary ring of that. It is the prettiest touch in a little home-coming letter, true to the feeling of the moment; but for all that the feeling is most carefully committed to paper. It can be objected that to say Heine always gave his confessions a literary turn is not to show that he was insincere. But that is not the point. The point is that Heine was not possessed of the autobiographical spirit. He would not put anything down about himself simply because it was true. It must have a literary value. If it were trivial, or vulgar, or incapable of good prose, he would either transmute it or drop it altogether. Such was not the way of Rousseau or of Pepys.

"Pouvez-vous siffler?" asked the doctor of Heine as he fought for breath almost in his last hour. "Pas même une comédie de M. Scribe", gasped Heine when he could find his voice. He was Heinrich Heine to the end. Always a man of sincere and exquisite feeling, he was always without conviction. He was not even a sincere sceptic. Born a Jew, baptised into the Reformed Church, and professing free thought at the last, he was never really a Jew, or a German Protestant, or a freethinker. Actually he was without a creed. He was also without a country. As the adopted German he beautifully in his young days mourned the Elector at Düsseldorf, and later he was suspected of France for his contributions to a German newspaper. As the adopted Frenchman he loved the Revolution, sang the power and the glory of Napoleon, and went into exile at Paris. He could never confine himself within the ready-made dogmas proffered him by his age, and he was not the serious thinker to build a system of his own. He lived outside the beliefs of his time, enjoyed them one by one, and rejected them. By temperament he was incapable either to deny the truth or to accept it. Therefore he took refuge in his pose of the supreme ironist, a pose magnificently kept up to the end. He jested with his last breath, and of his birth he wrote with exquisite irony: "My mother tells how, during her pregnancy, she saw an apple hanging in someone else's garden, but forbore to take it that her child might not be a thief. Wherefore all my life long I have had a secret longing for fine apples, together with a respect for the property of another and a horror of thieving".

Alas! what would we not give for the complete book of these memoirs, unwritten or destroyed? The chapters here preserved are among the best things of Heine. Had he continued as he began and preserved the rest, we should have had, not perhaps a straightforward account of his life, but something infinitely more precious—a work of supreme literary distinction. We should have had a volume of Heine's ripest thought about life and the world, presented with those fascinating alternations of grave and gay characteristic of his work and temperament—alternations that shade so delicately into one another that it is often difficult to say exactly where the note is changed. We should have known, too, more exactly what Heine wanted us really to think of him. He would not have asked us to value him for what he was not. He was quite content to be understood by those who were really capable of understanding. His ironic pose and his wilful lies about himself—these were dust in the eyes of the vulgar, and with his last breath he kept them off. But the real Heine is here, between the lines of these memoirs. The pity is that the lines are so few.

AMATEUR DOCTORS.

"The State and the Doctor." By Sidney and Beatrice Webb. London: Longmans. 1910. 6s. net.

HUMAN nature, the constant factor in any situation, is the one which the social reformer seems most constantly to ignore. Make a clean sweep of faulty machinery and we must come appreciably nearer