

help feeling that Miss Glaspell makes a too heavy demand on her readers.

After all this intricacy and misery it is a relief to turn to the cold, clear prose of *Alexander* and the seven companion tales. Most of them might be described as return tickets to childhood, and of these it is difficult to say which is best—the delicate fantasy of "The Peach Tree," the fairy story of the King (who lived on air), or the story of the child who looked through the tinted panes of a window until, unable to resist the temptations of a lemon-coloured world, she shed her clothes and ran down to the sea, where she shocked all the fat bathers. As we read about the small boy, Alexander, we recapture the adventurous, baffling moments of our own childhood: the queer things that seemed natural and the ordinary things that our own vision transformed. Mr. Bates is to be thanked as much for his eight delightful stories as for the loveliness of his style.

In her new novel Miss Simpson returns to an early post-War England in the period immediately following Waterloo. She brings home the force of the platitude that history repeats itself. We have the picture of a people, made restless by war, of a profiteering father and his daughter, who chafes against restraint. The book begins engagingly, and the rather formal plot is well worked out, but we had hoped for something better than this from the author of *Cups, Wands and Swords*.

Private Life begins like a detective story, but it is delightfully different from most of these. A young journalist and poet is murdered, and the friend who is deputed to write his biography attempts to unravel the mystery of the dead man's private life. Up to a point he succeeds, and the solution of the final mystery is brilliantly and grimly unexpected. Lovers of mystery who are tired of Scotland Yard, clever amateurs, and frequent corpses may be assured of liking this book, which is well written and most amusingly padded with indictments against the cant and hypocrisy of a section of the daily Press.

B. E. TODD.

SHEEP'S-HEAD AND BABYLON. By Marjorie Bowen. (The Bodley Head. 7s. 6d.)—Miss Bowen's collection of

short stories proves that her muse is extraordinarily versatile. Her book is divided into two sections—"Stories of Yesterday" and "Stories of To-day"—and it is as difficult to say which is the more satisfactory of the two as it is to make a selection of the best tales in each. There is a Stevensonian flavour about the title story, an O. Henry twist at the end of the bitter little tale "False Pretences," and all the ghost stories are eerie enough to distress the most phlegmatic readers. Perhaps the most brilliant story of all is one entitled "The Pond," which describes a woman's jealousy of her brother's wife, who has usurped her position as mistress of the house. It is a most significant and brilliant little story. Miss Bowen is that rare type—an excellent teller of tales well worth the telling, and, what is more, worth reading and re-reading.

A Library List

MISCELLANEOUS:—*The Architectural Side of Golf.* By H. N. Wethered and T. Simpson. (Longmans. £3 3s.)—*Our New Religion.* By Rt. Hon. H. A. L. Fisher. (Benn. 6s.)—*B.B.C. Year-Book, 1930.* (B.B.C. 2s.)—*The Annals of the King's Royal Rifle Corps.* By Major-General Sir Steuart Hare. Vol. IV. (Murray. 25s.)—*The Causal and the Casual in History.* By John Buchan. (Cambridge University Press. 2s.)—*Crime in Ink.* By C. Carvalho and B. Sparkes. (Scribners. 10s. 6d.)—*The Forbidden Zone.* By M. Borden. (Heinemann. 6s.)—*From a Paris Balcony.* By E. Dimnet. (Richards. 6s.)—*The World's Warships.* By O. Parkes. (Sampson Low. 7s. 6d.)—*Mary Harrison's Guide to Modern Cookery.* Revised Edition. (J. M. Dent. 7s. 6d.)

BIOGRAPHIES:—*King George V. in His Own Words.* By F. A. Mackenzie. (Benn. 12s. 6d.)—*Gallipoli Memories.* By Compton Mackenzie. (Cassell. 7s. 6d.)—*The Generalship of Ulysses S. Grant.* By Colonel J. F. C. Fuller. (Murray. 21s.)—*The Autobiography of Calvin Coolidge.* (Chatto and Windus. 10s. 6d.)—*The Right Honourable Sir Thomas Clifford Allbutt.* By Sir H. D. Rolleston. (Macmillan. 15s.)—*The Life of Alfred Nobel.* By Professor H. Schuck and R. Sohlmann. (Heinemann. 21s.)—*James Ramsay MacDonald.* By M. A. Hamilton. New Edition. (Cape. 7s. 6d.)—*Byways.* By Sir R. Blomfield. (Murray. 15s.)—*More Cracks With "We Two."* By The Marquis and Marchioness of Aberdeen and Temair. (Methuen. 15s.)