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particularity... by "The Hollow Man," and the final flourish of the poker in "Funspot."

JOHN BROPHY.

Modern Short Stories

Modern Short Stories. (Lovat Dickson. 3s. 6d.)

In the history of the contemporary short story, *Lovat Dickson's Magazine* is sure to have some place: how honoured and how large, only time, and not this volume can show. Its misfortune, from the beginning, was that its policy, and in consequence its stories, fell between two schools. It made few discoveries, accepted known writers rather too easily, too often for name's sake. Its many translations should have given way to indigenous work by unknowns. Too often it printed American stories because they were tough stories, or because Americans said they were good stories. Finally it fell away from its original grace, invited reminiscences, and quietly died.

But it did exist: and all credit to it and to those who founded it. To bring into existence a magazine devoted solely to the short story is like walking tipsy across a tight rope; and only those who have tried it can know what it means. Compensation comes in looking back, in saying "Mad though it was, I did it." And in effect this is what the editors of *Lovat Dickson's* are doing in *Modern Short Stories*. They are looking back; the only compensation, perhaps, that they can offer themselves. In doing so they offer us twenty-six short stories, an oddly small anthology, considering the many stories they published, and a rather whimsical choice. The book, in fact, may be criticised by its omissions. Where is Mr. Sean O'Faolain with his delightful *Jubilee in the North Abbey*, Mr. Frank O'Connor Mr. L. A. Pavey, Mr. Fritiof Nilssen with his *Fishing Party*, Mr. Douglas Boyd, and others, known and unknown, whose work deserved a place here? Snags of copyright may have kept them out; if so, more's the pity. To have had the honour of having two of Ireland's four finest living short story writers in the net, and then to have let them go! These and a dozen others deserved more permanent honour.

Of the twenty-five authors who are here—one having two stories—Lawrence is easily supreme with *Strike Pay*, an early work evidently, immature and somehow damnably casual, but bitter as an unripe apple. *Strike Pay* shows Lawrence in, so to speak, his own back-yard, in surroundings of which he knew every shadow and accent. It should stand as a text piece for all who would write about the poor, for all who fancy they know how the poor live, speak, and spend their pay, strike or otherwise. Anyone who has had the luck or ill-luck to spring from the bowels of an industrial area will pass *Strike Pay* as a gem, genuine in every gleam and facet. It alone makes the volume worth every penny of its three-and-six. For the rest, there are stories here by Miss Henry Handel Richardson, Mr. L. A. G. Strong, Mr. A. Calder Marshall, M. André Maurois, Grazia Deledda and others as well-known, making a volume that does the barest justice to Mr. Dickson's courageous enterprise.

H. E. BATES.

that Mrs. Clemens "edited" nearly all her husband's manuscripts, and that later the process was continued by W. D. Howells, there was an underlying suggestion that Mark Twain might have been unduly restricted in his literary expression, that he had not been allowed after all to have his say. In his foreword to this volume the editor returns to this theme, perhaps by way of excuse for his own rôle in selecting and "editing" these Notes. This time he says: "Mark Twain's taste was unreliable—as unreliable as that of any genius: he was likely to mistake cheap banalities for choice bits of humour. His advisers prevailed upon him to eliminate, on occasion, and knowing this, a suspicious minority hankering for revelations, call for Mark Twain, unsuppressed, unexpurgated, unedited. The result of such a procedure would be rather dismal; the eliminations would disturb nobody's refined sensibilities; they would do worse; they would sadden, disenchant and bore the reader."

After reading through the Notes it is not difficult to accept this judgment. For with all Mr. Paine's editing, the book still contains much that is saddening, disenchanting, and even boring. Yet the whole book is a delight; the truth being, of course, that good depends on bad for its existence. And the good things that Mark Twain wrote are too pungent and concentrated to stand by themselves. In the arid desert of his personal cares, or amid pages of a strenuous kind of pseudo-philosophy, they suddenly shine forth like



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