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him. As she continues to withhold herself physically and mentally, he picks up with any woman who will serve his purpose. Naturally, she leaves Charles to go to the devil, to crawl upwards by every shabby trick he can think of, in the Imps organization, and goes off with Arthur. Her sensitive soul requires a cottage seven miles away from the factory, and Arthur has to cycle that distance twice a day, come rain, come snow. He gets a chill, drying off by spontaneous evaporation in the shops, and ... But that's enough of giving away the plot.

AN amusing story comes from New York about Gerstle Mack, the biographer of Cézanne and Toulouse-Lautrec. Robert Nathan, the American novelist, was taken by his mother to visit a friend of hers, a Mrs. Mack. Whilst the two friends were chatting, Nathan wandered off into another room and began to play the piano. As he was playing, another man came in and started measuring the walls with a ruler. Mr. Nathan, assuming that he was a paper-hanger, paid no attention to him, and the newcomer remained silent. Presently Mrs. Mack came in and said: 'Oh, Gerstle, I see that you have already met Mr. Nathan.' 'Mr. Nathan?' said the wall-paper measurer, 'Why, I paid no attention to him; I thought he was the piano tuner.'

MARGARET AYER BARNES (whose novel *Wisdom's Gate* is reviewed on p. 33) was recently awarded 532,153 dollars damages, along with her fellow-author Edward Sheldon, for infringement of the copyright of their play *Dishonoured Lady* by a film company. This must be getting on for a record award in a copyright action.

Hands Old and New

by H. E. Bates¹

IN one quarter Mr. Manhood has been described as a popular writer spoiled by misguided advice; in other words, if left to himself, he would have been a descendant in the line of Kipling or O. Henry, taking his ease on the dividends of the gilt-edged *Saturday Evening Post*. I mention this not because it is true in any way, but with the object of showing it is not true. In my view Mr. Manhood is a poet forced by his own time and circumstances to write in prose. This could be said of a dozen other short story writers of to-day, but it seems pointedly true of Manhood, who treats the writing of prose as a tortured process of distillation or, more aptly, as the evolution of a pattern in verbal mosaic. All who know him are aware of the tortures that prose inflicts on him; those who know only his stories must be aware that deep, embryonic struggles precede the birth of his beautifully plumaged sentences. This, from the time of *Nightseed*, has been one of two most consistent characteristics of his stories. The other is that, over a period of ten years and five volumes, he has shown no hankering after experiment. In *Nightseed*, *Apples by Night*, *Crack of Whips*, *Fierce and Gentle* and now in *Sunday Bugles*² he delivers goods that are in colour and calibre practically the same as ever. Other authors like to experiment: try their hands at new enterprises in technique, the conte, the sketch, the flat report. But not Manhood. His work is consistent in its

story
a
poetry

¹ Author of *Spella Ho*, *The Poacher*, *Thirty Tales*, *A House of Women*, etc.

² *Sunday Bugles*, by H. A. Manhood (Crown 8vo. 7s. 6d. net)

rare oddity and flamboyancy, its prolific use of startling metaphor and violent climax, his method of using the fantastic to illustrate the ordinary, the ordinary to illustrate the fantastic. His stories are so full of the kind of conceits that embroider the work of seventeenth-century poets that I feel he would have been happier in an age where the rich uses of imagination were not looked on with suspicion. He sports rather too fine a coloured doublet in this age of pin-stripes and umbrellas. As for *Sunday Bugles*, every story in it bears the authentic Manhood imprint. It is an imprint that no other writer of to-day can put on a story. It guarantees the odd originality and unfading dye of a product of which Manhood alone knows the secret.

Mr. James Miller is a new novelist. His first book, *The Three Women*,¹ resembles the performance of a young boxer who has not yet learned to cover up. Throughout this book he frequently stands wide open, undefended, waiting to be hit by a frisky critic. I have already forgotten where those places were, and should not take advantage of them if I could remember. The book deals with a short period of the life of a young man, Neal Palmer, who while working on a farm and then in a factory, tries to work his way to a university. He is a sensitive, gentle fellow who falls very easy prey to the type of woman that wants a nice new house with nice new furniture in a nice new road. He marries, the thing is a hopeless failure, and he finally leaves home. This is Woman No. 1. In presenting this creature Mr. Miller makes use of a technique so often employed by Tchegov, who rarely presented ugly, vicious, vindictive types

¹ *The Three Women*, by James Miller (Crown 8vo. 7s. 6d. net)

of womanhood at first hand but almost always through the eyes of just such a gentle, sensitive fellow as Neal Palmer. For this first section Mr. Miller gets full points. When Neal Palmer wanders from home, works for almost nothing at a pig-yard, falls in love with Woman No. 2, Alice, gets her with child, only to find that Woman No. 3, Stella, is hopelessly in love with him, Mr. Miller is sometimes less sure of himself. Sometimes he is up against the difficulty of moving characters that are too lethargic to move for themselves. One of his other influences being the author of *Sons and Lovers*, he occasionally gets lost in the mists of Laurentian pathology and the style in consequence loses force. This is a pity, for Mr. Miller is stylist enough to rely on his own technique. In fact his style has plenty of punch and colour, and is full of a competence and warm enthusiasm that are a pleasure to feel. The objectivity of the scenes at the first farm, then at the pig-farm, then at the third farm where so much happens to tangle up the life of Neal Palmer, is firm and splendidly conscious. To go back to the boxing metaphor: *The Three Women* does not get the Lonsdale belt for literature. But it seems a fair bet that its author will one day write a book that will.

EVERY publisher worth the name seeks to publish the perfect book. We shall shortly do so. When Henry Bidou's *Paris* appeared in the French edition, the *Times Literary Supplement* said in a review of it, 'if only this book had an index it would be the perfect Paris companion'. The English edition (Illustrated. Demy 8vo. 15s. net), an illustration from which is reproduced on page 9, contains a full index.