

NOTES ON BOOKS.

FOR the web of his story, *Sahib-Log*,⁹ Mr. JOHN TRAVERS has taken the misunderstandings liable to arise between couples united without real knowledge of each other's character. Medical men in family practice often see them; in fiction they commonly dispose the reader to wish to incarnate the principals and beat them for their stupidity. However, Mr. Travers's hero and heroine behave fairly sensibly and their story is told pleasantly. But much better than the web is the woof of the tale; this consists of incidents serving to contrast Eastern and Western lines of thought and the habits of Europeans in towns in Great Britain and at Indian stations respectively. There is, too, an excellent account of a fight, the whole conveying a good idea of life on the Indian frontier. Incidentally a light is thrown on the fashion in which British authority in India is being undermined, and English women are shown how they might strengthen the hold of Great Britain on the esteem of the natives of India instead of playing the part of casual uninterested visitors. If, however, the novel has a purpose, it is so skilfully concealed as to keep the book well within the percentage of published novels which make really pleasant reading.

In her latest novel, *The Bounty of the Gods*,¹⁰ Lady HELEN FORBES deals with the fortunes of three boys, half Spanish, half English in parentage, and takes the reader first to England, next to Spain, and finally to Italy. In each phase the social atmosphere as well as the climatic environment is changed, and their joint influence carefully brought out. Her real hero, puzzle as he proves to his friends, will seem to most readers a very human person; unattractive as he is in many ways, they are likely to conceive for him sufficient affection to make them regret that his history has not been traced just a few years longer. The hero's character is not, however, by any means the only one of interest in the book. In her sketches of a good many social classes, the authoress includes detailed pictures of characteristic members of them; several convey the impression of being drawn from real life. In respect of the three boys the book is in effect a study of mental heredity, and leaves the impression that the hypotheses put forward are probably correct despite the fanciful guise in which they appear. As a novel the interest of the book is sustained to the end.

⁹ *Sahib-Log*. By John Travers. London: Duckworth and Co. (Post 8vo, pp. 318. 6s.)

¹⁰ *The Bounty of the Gods*. By Lady Helen Forbes. London: Duckworth and Co. 1910. (Post 8vo, pp. 340. 6s.)

MEDICAL AND SURGICAL APPLIANCES.

A Bicycle Stand.

AN appliance recently put on the market under the name of the "Nicura" is designed to enable a bicycle rider to leave his machine standing anywhere he pleases, and at the same time prevent its being moved or taken away. It consists of two light steel stays ending in a horizontal foot-piece, the whole being attached to the axle of the back wheel, on which it can be turned through a half circle. When in use it is turned downwards to the ground; it then



bicycle is fitted with a carrier. When the device has been turned down it cannot be turned upwards except by the owner with his key. Two such keys are supplied, and as they are made in a very large number of different combinations no one but the purchaser is likely to have one of appropriate shape. Nor is the owner likely to leave his key at

locks automatically in the vertical position, and the bicycle, with its back wheel slightly off the ground, stands perfectly steady by itself. The annexed engraving shows this position. When not in use it is turned upwards so as to rest against the back of the seat pedestal; it is then scarcely visible, and can be placed in this position even if the

home because he has to unlock the stand himself before he uses his machine. At home the back wheel can be revolved freely for cleansing and the bicycle left in a passage or room without risk of damage to paper or paint. The price of the appliance is 6s., and can be obtained of the "Nicura" Patents Co., 110, Fenchurch Street, E.C.

A Milk Pasteurizer.

One objection which is raised to most of the machines for the pasteurization of milk is that it is difficult to provide that all the milk treated shall be raised to the required temperature. The inventor of the "Evergator," Baron A. T. Pfeiff, of 266, Vauxhall Bridge Road, S.E., claims that this objection is overcome by the construction of his apparatus. Steam is the heating medium used, and by an ingenious arrangement thin layers of milk are sandwiched between copper-lined cavities containing the steam. The temperature of the milk is raised to about 200° F., and after passing through a cooling apparatus is cooled to about 60° F. The unpleasant taste which is associated with sterilized milk is entirely absent from that which has been "Evergated." Experiments which have been carried out by Swedish Bacteriologists have shown that the Evergator is capable of destroying tubercle bacilli, diphtheria bacilli, and *B. typhosus*. A small apparatus, capable of dealing with 50 quarts an hour, and which can be used like a kettle over an ordinary fire, costs about £4, and a larger one, which deals with 300 quarts hourly, and which requires a special steam-producing installation, costs about £17.

LEGISLATION FOR THE FEEBLE-MINDED.

PERSEVERING efforts are being made to impress upon the Government and the Legislature the importance, in the national interest, of early legislation upon the lines of the Report of the Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded. A sort of propagandist mission in support of eugenic doctrine visited the House of Commons recently, and before a numerous audience of members (Mr. Masterman presiding). Dr. WHETHAM laid stress upon the necessity in future legislative measures of considering not merely the improvement of environment, but the problem of selection as regards parenthood—at least in a negative sense. It had, he said, been shown that the average fertility of the families furnishing feeble-minded children exceeded that of the normal in the ratio of about 7.3 to 4.

Dr. LANGDON DOWN pointed out that 1 in every 250 of the population, 1 in 5 of the inmates of prisons, and 2 out of 3 of those in inebriate institutions, are feeble in mind, and that feeble-mindedness was strongly hereditary, and a permanent condition.

Dr. SLAUGHTER referred to the connexion of feeble-mindedness with pauperism, and argued that a complete scheme for the segregation of the feeble-minded would in the long run be a true economy, by checking the alarming increase of feeble-minded progeny.

A discussion followed amongst the members present, including Sir WILLIAM COLLINS, Sir PHILIP MAGNUS, Mr. NOEL BUXTON, and others.

Last week a conference was held, at the invitation of the Charity Organization Society, of representatives of institutions and organizations interested in the care of the feeble-minded throughout the country. Lord SHUTTLEWORTH presided in the morning, and a paper was read by Dr. H. B. DONKIN, a member of the Royal Commission, on the need of establishing a single supervising authority for the care of the feeble-minded. He urged that the constitution of the supervising board should be predominantly medical, owing to the predominantly medical character of its work, which called for a high degree of medical knowledge and skill. The inspection of institutions for mental defectives throughout the country would need to be carried out by well qualified and experienced medical men distributed in different localities and reporting to a central board in London. Mr. HELME, M.P., Chairman of the Lancashire Asylums Board, opened the discussion, which was carried on by Mrs. HUME PENSLEY, who drew attention to the confusion, injustice, and even cruelty caused by the inefficient methods now in vogue, owing to the fact that the feeble-minded were dealt with by four independent authorities—the Board of Education, the Local Government Board, the Home Office, and the Lunacy Commissioners—whose regulations were not in accord. The Lunacy Commissioners alone took a comprehensive view of the question, but continuity of control was essential in