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and being upset by them in the muddiest bit of the whole yard, or falling into the river when trying to land a 'monster' fish, and being carried straight home to bed. The book goes on to tell us how Sonny, through his great desire to become a soldier, like his father, conquered his boastful habits, and gained the Humane Society's medal for saving another boy's life.

Then we have three books, at 1s. each: *The Camerons of Niddry*, by Mrs. Stacy Waddy; *Through the Furnace*, by F. E. Reade; and *The Nursery Rebels*, by H. Elrington. The first two are for older people, and the last is for children. It is a story of three little pickles, Don, Harold, and Edmund, who, thinking themselves too old to go in the same railway carriage as their nurse, set out alone. Read what the results were.

Next come *The Foster Brothers*, by C. A. Mercer; and *Phœbe's Long Holiday*, by Mabel Escombe; 6d. each. Most of us will prefer the first of these, as it is a bright little tale, while the last is too sad for children. Both of these have pretty covers, the one brown and the other crimson, and the illustrations are remarkably good for the price.

There are also three 3d. books: *A Peep into Fairyland*, by G. E. R.; *The Messengers*, by M. C. Butler; and *Richard Beavers*, by the Rev. H. Boyden.

Sons o' Men, by G. B. Lancaster (Melrose; 6s.).—Since Kipling's *Light that Failed*, we have had nothing so good as Mr. Lancaster's *Sons o' Men*. We have had nothing so intensely realistic, nothing which absolutely compelled us to see into the depths of life, as this does. Bret Harte threw light on the rough side of American life. Kipling made music of some coarse elements in India. Now Mr. Lancaster takes his place beside those two, making the rougher and sterner side of New Zealand life to live in literature.

Sons o' Men contains a number of short stories, each touching some phase of ranch experience in New Zealand. The same characters occur in most of them, and all stand out vividly before us in unmistakable personality.

There are problems in the book. They are not there because Mr. Lancaster wishes to air his opinions on them, they are there because they are part of life. There is the drink question, and there is also the question of difference of race and colour. This latter we have in the Story of Wi, probably the strongest of all. The most humorous tale is the last, 'Through the Fire,' where we have the account of how Walt worsted the widow and won Darlint.

From the Sunday School Union have come the new volume of *Young England* (5s.), and the *Child's Own Magazine* (1s.). This year *Young England* is resplendent in crimson, with the figure of a horse and rider on the cover. Nor are its contents inferior to its cover. There are two continued stories: 'The Sway of the World,' by Lawrence Zeal, and 'Gerald the Sheriff,' by Charles Whistler, who has already gained a name by his Danish stories. There are also a number of thrilling short stories, the best being those on public school life; and the jokes are there under their old name of 'Something to Smile at.'

Of all the magazines for the little ones, the *Child's Own* is our favourite, because from beginning to end it is so bright, and its stories are all written by authors who know how to adapt themselves to children. Besides illustrations on almost every page, there is a large coloured picture at the beginning called Distinguished Visitors.

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SUBJECTS.

The Education of St. John in Patmos.

BY PROFESSOR W. M. RAMSAY, D.C.L., LL.D., LITT.D., ABERDEEN.

IT needs no demonstration that the Book of the Revelation might readily be accepted as a possible work of the person who is depicted in the Synoptic Gospels under the name of John. The character of the writer of the Revelation is just what we could imagine that John to become in the natural process of growth. But it always seemed to me that the greatest difficulty in the New Testament was to comprehend how one of the Sons of Thunder could develop into the author of the Fourth Gospel. The difficulty now appears to me to fade away, when we try to conceive clearly the circumstances in which the Apocalypse was composed.

St. John had been banished to Patmos, an unimportant islet, whose condition in ancient times is little known. In the Imperial period banishment to one of the small rocky islands of the Ægean was a common and recognized penalty, corresponding in some respects (though only in a very rough way and with many serious differences) to the former English punishment of transportation. It carried with it entire loss of civil rights and almost entire loss of property; usually a small allowance was reserved to sustain the exile's life. The penalty was lifelong; it ended only with death. The exile was allowed to live in free intercourse with the people of the island, and to earn money. But he could not inherit money nor bequeath his own, if he saved or earned any: all that he had passed to the State at his death. He was cut off from the outer world, though he was not treated with personal cruelty or constraint within the limits of the islet where he was confined.

But there are serious difficulties forbidding the supposition that St. John was banished to Patmos in this way.

In the first place this punishment was reserved for persons of good standing and some wealth. Now it seems utterly impossible to admit that St. John could have belonged to that class. In Ephesus he was an obscure stranger of Jewish origin; and under the Flavian emperors the Jews of Palestine were specially open to suspicion on