

sive, and withal warmblooded treatise on modern art that the eyes and minds of even the most wilfully ignorant and prejudiced would be opened by it. "I have chosen", he says, "the primer method—and title—because it seemed to me that what we need most, to widen appreciation of contemporary creative art, is to escape for a while from High Learning and get back to a child's directness of approach." Yes, a child's directness of approach, but a very mature individual's patience and grasp of the problem—the huge problem—set before him. Mr. Cheney devotes most of his time and attention to the pure arts of painting and sculpture, from their branching out from Impressionism to the present; but adequately (for a primer) includes architecture and the theatre, showing their tremendous importance in the creative current. He explains and comments upon Cubism, Futurism, Vorticism, and all the inevitable schools, fads, and sensations tagging on the main movement, the art of mobile color (which he seems to think vitally important), and Expressionism, illustrating his points with a remarkably comprehensive collection of contemporary works, from the slightest sketch to the most massive marble, the automobile to the skyscraper. Even to the enlightened and initiated this Primer is worthwhile, for its clarifying of fundamental artistic issues and its outward beauty of printing and paper.

In spite of its triteness, one must repeat the familiar comparison between dogs and humans upon reading "Dogs and Men" (Scribner) by Mary Ansell, for the dog biographies she gives are well calculated to show the psychic superiority of the best of dogs over the general run of two legged creatures. Yet hers are always consistently doggy dogs, never improperly endowed with a hu-

man psyche. Some are dogs of note, such as Luath the Newfoundland who played the part of Nana in "Peter Pan". And there was Porthos, the St. Bernard who invaded the pulpit of a Scotch Presbyterian church to the horror of the congregation. "Dogs in Scotch churches", says the author, "seem liable to lose all control of themselves. A friend saw . . . whilst she was waiting for the Holy Communion, a terrier, an Aberdeen, sit up on his haunches and beg before the Elements." Altogether, a delectable collection of amusing and illuminative dog stories. The physical nature of the dog is very fully considered in "Dr. Little's Dog Book" (McBride) by George Watson Little, D. V. M., who writes both as a qualified scientist and as a veterinary of the widest experience. It is a readable as well as an authoritative manual on the care, training, and treatment of dogs both in sickness and in health: liberally illustrated and well indexed.

Books on religious matters were formerly in the majority on second hand bookstands. Not so long ago, writings on the Great War came into first place. And now that mournful leadership is being contested by literature on Russia. "The Reforging of Russia" (Dutton) deserves a better fate than many of its companions. Edwin Ware Hullinger, who wrote it, was the United Press correspondent in Moscow until he was ejected. He does not pretend to write an unbiased tale; but his prejudices are manifest, candid, and not at all rancorous. His ideal of democracy is the American one. The turn of event which wrought hardship on his friends of the upper classes is obnoxious to him. He dislikes the Tcheka which he blames for his expulsion. And with all this in mind, he writes a good newspaper man's story of the period of the new economic

policy and a plausible interpretation of its meaning. Too bad that Hullinger could not have stayed to tell us of the fall of the Nep.

To talk of little matters of everyday life in a way that is humorous, practical, and pathetic seems to be the aim of Ian Hay in "The Shallow End" (Houghton Mifflin). At the same time he gives us, or tries to, an international viewpoint on a few selected subjects. The first four sections, named for the seasons, deal with London. The atmosphere of Piccadilly Circus, Haymarket, and the moods of the crowds in the park, cinemas, and night clubs are cleverly depicted. In fact, we wonder just why Mr. Hay considered it necessary to wander from these interesting little studies to New York and the national game there called "Hunt the Hoop". Was it to give English readers a taste of life abroad or to make New Yorkers feel at home? To recent visitors to London "The Shallow End" cannot fail to be of interest; and even those who have never been to London may find a congenial topic in the theatre, boxing, cricket, boating, animals, or human nature therein.

There may be some foundation for a feeling that Howells has been subjected to the process which H. G. Wells (in his incomparable "Boon") has labeled, in ribald fashion, as "greatening". But his solidly enduring qualities no doubt are real enough to survive even injudicious praise. No American man of letters of our day, save Mark Twain, has been so fully discussed by the critics and expositors: the incomplete bibliography of books and articles about him appended to "William Dean Howells" (Harvard) by Oscar W. Firkins covers nearly two pages. Mr.

Firkins's study, however, differs from most of its predecessors in that it is more an interpretation, an illuminating commentary, than a critical estimate. It is, of course, critical and analytic, but its aim is more to portray the man and his work than to appraise him. The conclusion reached by Mr. Firkins is that justice has not yet been done to Howells as critic or as poet, and that "due recognition" has not yet been given "to three great elements in his fiction—its vitality, the surpassing distinctness and variety of its characterization, and its firm grasp of some of the rarer and more elusive aspects of everyday reality". The book is handsomely printed and well indexed.

"A great architecture is something to be seen and felt and lived in. By this criterion most of our pretentious buildings are rather pathetic", writes Lewis Mumford in his "Sticks and Stones: A Study of American Architecture and Civilization" (Boni, Liveright). This reviewer appreciates and agrees with Mr. Mumford's statement. You have but to observe the monotony of skyscrapers and the ugly similarity of the "robot" made apartment houses of this world we live in to realize its truth. Until the coming of the machine age, as the author illustrates, the steadily developing American architecture had many beautiful achievements to its credit, particularly in the New England villages. But architecture without personality is not art, and the machine age does not encourage individuality.

Apparently there is a perennially eager audience for the conventional travel book that appears ever so often from the pen of some painstaking traveler. The formula is a simple one, and consists of a cheery, narrative style