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If, as I hope, the interest which has been aroused in our library and museum system is to bear fruit, it is the many and not the few who must do the cultivating. Those who have been in charge of the existing institutions have been condemned to share the disheartening fate of the ancient Israelites, and to make bricks without straw. Plan after plan has been abandoned, ideal after ideal has been postponed for lack of money, and in a democratic society it is demos who holds the purse. No wiser or more helpful words have been written on this subject than those which I read this morning in the "Press":

"Christchurch could hardly mark the occasion (of its centenary) more fittingly than by recapturing the spirit of its founders and building a worthy library or museum."

I would add "Why not both?"

NEW NOVELS

By Our Reviewer.

The House Next Door, by Sophie Cole, relates the varying fortunes of a happy-go-lucky and somewhat Bohemian family named Smith. Algy has enthusiastic ideas for trying to better the fortunes of the family, but being a bungler his various schemes meet with disaster. Jemina, the daughter, becomes an actress, has a trying time, including a romantic interlude, but eventually gains the success she deserves. Robin, another member of the family, is engaged to an empty-headed young woman whom he gives up in favour of Madoline Strang, a next door neighbour, who throughout the book acts as a foil to the bohemianism of the Smiths. In the end even Algy makes a success of a twopenny lending library. The vagaries and adventures described make light and breezy reading.

The Grim Game by Sydney Horler, is another story of Tiger Standish, the amateur detective, in which he has to unravel the machinations and curtail the Power of Ronstadt, of which Kuhnreich is a sinister and scheming dictator. Among the many secret agents he has to grapple with a lovely blonde spy named Elsa Brendt. What the particular plot was and its unravelling is best told by the author himself, and readers, however credulous, may be sure of a thriller of the first water.

The Vanishing Idol, by Geo. Gibbs. The story centres round a stolen emerald Buddha, which is supposed to have been among the lost treasures

of Angkor, but the secret hiding place of which is known to a bankrupt English adventurer named Colonel Fonteney. The other characters in the book are a party of Americans on a "Far Eastern Luxury Cruise," consisting of Kendall, a young lawyer, Mrs Craig and her daughter Judy, Lili Daland, a film star, and Murray Dale, her leading man. There is a description of the cruise and adventures, surreptitious nocturnal visits to each other's cabins, and a number of love affairs, but the main theme is Fonteney's theft and smuggling of the Emerald Buddha out of Siam, to be ultimately defeated by Colonel Daskam of the British India Secret Service.

"And so a man certainly heartless, and apparently invincible, who bumps off many others in the course of the story, is at last himself bumped off."

**SOME RECENTLY PURCHASED
FICTION**

Adam and Even in the Garden of Edenbridge C. Hamilton
Afterglow Ruby M. Ayers
Bandits of the Barren F. C. Robertson
Behold Here's Poison Georgette Heyer
Black Wilderness Louis Kaye
The Call of Love Henry St. John Cooper
Cardyce for the Defence Bruce Graeme
Caroline Richmal Crompton
A City of Bells E. Goudge
Cowardly Custard Baroness von Hutton
Everything is Thunder J. L. Hardy
Family Symphony I. C. Clarke
The Far Pursuit Ottwell Binns
Faster! Faster! E. M. Delafield
The Five Red Stars Ben Bolt
A Fresh Deal E. W. Savi
Greengates R. C. Sheriff
The Grim Game Sydney Horler
The Hammer of Allah Douglas V. Duff
Hollywood Madness Mis Pat Macgill
Hoop of Gold G. M. Attenborough
The House Next Door Sophie Cole
Island of Fear Hulbert Footner
Mountain Men Jackson Gregory
The New House Lettice Cooper
Penrose Mystery Dr. A. Freeman
The Posse of Crystal Creek Tevis Miller
Raffles Under Sentence Barry Pirowne
Scar 77 Graham Seton
So They Began John Guthrie
Solomon My Son John Erskine
So Many Paths Simon Dare
To-morrow Will be Lovely May Christie
Torch Bearers Hugh Pendexter
Trouble at Gayi Mrs Baillie Reynolds
The Vanishing Idol Geo. Gibbs

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