

THE NEWEST BOOKS.

3YA Lecturer Writes Some Verse

"The Litany of Beauty," by C. Stuart Perry, Sets a New Standard in New Zealand Verse—A Book to Keep the Reader Guessing—An Apprentice in the Days of Sailing Ships.

"THE LITANY OF BEAUTY," a collection of verses by the former 3YA lecturer, Mr. C. Stuart Perry, sets a new standard. Almost for the first time we have verse which is typically New Zealand, and yet disregards altogether the kowhai, rata and pohutakawa. Beautiful although they are, these flowers have so often been flaunted across the pages of New Zealand magazines that we have come to take them as the only mark which can stamp poetry as belonging to our own

*Can ever make life blossom from
your ashes:
That our remembrance of you should
grow dimmer,
As the fair face of parchment, age-
ing, yellows:
So Death, kind friend to you, to us
seems grimmer,
And old ghosts, grey with years, grow
fitter fellows."*

A touch of cynicism on the same page strikes another note:—

*"Illusions make a Paradise for fools.
And lost illusions turn it into Hell;
And, if you fall between these vicious
stools,
Doubt makes you clapper for his
cracked old bell."*

Messrs. Ferguson and Osborn have presented the book in a most attractive form: and have probably chosen this month to put it on the market in the expectation that people will realise it as a delicately flattering Christmas present.

IN "The Crime at the Quay Inn," Mr. Eric Aldhouse has written one of those murder stories with a dozen possible solutions, none of which seems altogether satisfactory. The true solution rests in a doctor's casebook, and it is hardly possible to deduce it from the ascertainable facts. The detective, Chief Inspector Lennard, takes the investigation as far as it is possible to take it—even finds the solution—but dismisses it as fantastic. Had the victim's medical history been placed before the reader at the beginning of the book, and then airily dismissed (as it might have been), this would have been a fair and ingenious puzzle. As it is, it is only ingenious; yet there is enough incident for the story to stand on its merits as a tale without having the added attraction of being also a problem. And the reader can readily get as far as the detective—as far as the Scotland Yard authorities in conference could get before closing the case. And one of the subsidiary problems leading up to Chief Inspector Lennard's impasse is difficult but perfectly possible for the reader to solve, and most intriguing. The situation is quite unusual—four men in a bar parlour, one shot dead; no possible means of ingress for the bullet from outside; collusion highly improbable—one of the three living men being a doctor and one a priest. And the chief clue is a most tantalising apparatus.

"The Crime at the Quay Inn," Eric Aldhouse, Philip Allan. Our copy from the publishers.

CAPTAIN FENTON'S "The Sea Apprentice" is not a story with a plot, but a narrative of two voyages round the world under canvas. The style, as might be expected, is a little old-fashioned, but the author succeeds in presenting a very real and interesting picture of the life of a sea apprentice in a full-rigged sailing ship

The apprentices served as ships' boys, but were being trained and studying to become officers. Captain Fenton's voyages (the book is autobiographical) contained practically every incident of any interest or excitement, short of shipwreck or dismasting. The loading of a nitrate cargo, fire at sea, the antics of sailors ashore, the loss of all the ship's canvas and the rudder in a blow off Hatteras, are all described with a commendable economy of

Famous Australian Bass Engaged for National Tour

THE New Zealand Broadcasting Board announces that Mr. Raymond Beatty, the Australian basso-cantante, has been engaged to sing from the Board's main stations. Mr. Beatty, it is understood, will arrive from Australia during December next to start his tour.

Mr. Beatty is coming to New Zealand at the very height of his career as a singer. He is still a young man, but he has already behind him a very solid record of musical achievements. In the past 10 years he has established himself in Australia, England, the Continent and America as an outstanding singer in concert, opera, oratorio and broadcasting. The dates of Mr. Beatty's performances at the various stations will be published later.

words. A South American calaboose, the Newcastle grub-houses, where the boys used to congregate, the catching of a mollyhawk, are pieces of description which keep the book from any suspicion of dullness. Indeed, it is extraordinary how little the interest lags—even in a calm there seems to have been plenty to do. The Marechal Suchet was a hungry ship—from one cause or another there were never enough stores aboard—and the narrative is relieved by the efforts of the apprentices to obtain more to eat, and of one of the men to starve himself in order to get compensation on their arrival in port. This man was unlucky—an accident put him to bed, and he was fed on arrowroot, beef extract and port from the medical stores under the eye of the captain. He put on weight and ended the voyage as well-looking as any man on board.

"The Sea Apprentice," Captain C. Fenton, Nautilus Library, Philip Allan. Our copy from the publishers.



WRITER OF VERSE.—Mr. C. Stuart Perry, Acting-Chief Librarian at the Central Library, Wellington, whose book of verse, "The Litany of Beauty," is reviewed on this page. Mr. Perry's home town is Christchurch, and he has frequently spoken from Station 3YA.

country. Mr. Perry shows us what a wrong impression that is.

Written in widely different metres, the verses are almost all free from the taint of the modern trend-and-uplift school. Their beauty is often frankly of the senses—sometimes, however, only of the intellect. Often the lines are striking:—

*"By the sweet lilac smell that drifts
across
The drowsy long verandah's glimmer-
ing cool . . . the lucent sea,
A stained-glass restfulness, all green
and blue."*

Mr. Perry's more recent work shows a marked advance and a very lively perception of beauty in all its countless forms. "Princeling" is an unusual poem, and striking in its balance—at the other end of the scale "The Pirate" is a rollicking little impression. The unusual metres include a sequence of eight eleven-syllable lines:—

*"That you should die, who lived so
much with laughter,
That when your eyelids, weighted
by dark lashes,
Have closed at last; no tears that fol-
low after,*