

Blackburn

shown in their relationship to their women-folk; at least this is true of the two elder sons. The youngest son and his father are rather foils to the other personalities than personalities themselves. Naturally, perhaps, the characters of the women-folk are drawn more convincingly than are the characters of the men. We are shewn womanhood as the protector of man, not merely of the artist against a business world, but of the business man against his own hard selfishness. The inefficient grumbler is protected at last by religion, his father by a new opportunity to make money. Of course love, religion, and business are supports of the will-to-live; but it is love that is most explored of the three in the *Sons of Jacob*. We have to think out for ourselves what love is, and then, indeed, how love must be different for the man and the woman. He loves and marries because he needs love; she marries and loves because she sees that she is needed for his love. The man's vague passion seems half selfishness, the woman's practical devotion seems half toil. The man gives everything he has in order to obtain what he needs even more; the woman takes all he has because only so can she give him the complement to his need. He has selfish generosity and she a generous selfishness; he gives to take, and she takes to give. And that, says Miss Ashton, is why the world goes on. We really should not be surprised if this were true.

B. J.

PERIOD. By Hugh Speaight. (Blackwell; 2/6).

In this collection of seven essays, the author, under the invocation of 'the Spirit of Period,' has endeavoured to look into the past, hoping in that way to learn to love the present, which he finds not to his liking. We hope he has succeeded. The excursion he has made, however, does not cover very much ground. He does go back as far as Sappho; but, for the rest, Balzac is the ultimate point to which 'the Spirit of Period' guides him. He has some curious things to say about the Irish and about Jesuit education in his essay on Joyce. His remarks on the Nineties and the days of King Edward are sometimes interesting, but the style throughout is too affected. Censorship worries him, but he is prepared to submit. In publishing these essays he has at least shown that he has the courage of his own, and not infrequently of other people's convictions.

H. J. B. G.