

BOOK REVIEWS

A Book of Ghosts. The Ash-Tree Press is to be congratulated on this excellently produced reprint, which includes the original David Murray Smith illustrations, two stories not in the 1904 editions, and a superb 12 page introduction by Richard Dalby with two full page plates (the cover of Purcell's biography, and the portrait heads from the *Strand Magazine* 1893), as well as a frontispiece portrait of SBG as an old man, and a specially commissioned cover illustration by Douglas Walters. It is a limited edition of 400 copies, published last November and well worth the retail price of £23.50.

The Report of the Transactions of the Devonshire Association (No.128, Dec.1996) includes a 25 page article by Dr. S.D.Trezise of Colyton entitled **Local Colour in the Devon Novels and Short Stories of Sabine Baring-Gould**. This is a brilliant, balanced and fascinating piece of scholarship, and a thoroughly readable addition to any SBG collection, or any literary person's files. It deserves to be made widely available in a more shelveable format!

Curious Myths of the Middle Ages has enjoyed more modern reprinting than any other SBG title. Here is a review of the latest edition, from the *Western Morning News*:

"This is an irresistible book that will turn you into a Baring-Gould fan if you are not one already. Here we have myths and legends from a time when people gave credence to bizarre and unlikely things.

There are the classic swan myths, the Sangreal, the man in the moon tales and many other nature legends and country beliefs that, no matter how you view them, belong as much in today's world as in the past and from which we surely have much to learn.

The stories, chosen for their intrinsic merit and worth to the modern reader, are brought up to date by John Matthews who is well known for his life-long study of traditional tales.

Baring-Gould's comments, left untouched, present the tales in a new light, and this fine book includes 12 stories from his 1869 collection, *Curious Myths*. An essay with each story gives the historical or mythological origins, and confirms Baring-Gould as a preserver of our heritage."