WHAT'S A GOOD BOOK

By ROBERT NACHTBIEB

THAT'S not an easy question to answer—there are so many good books. There are books for every taste and every degree of intellectual capacity. There are books for the Colonel's lady, books for Judy O'Grady and the books for Judy O'Grady not infrequently, it is painful to relate, please the Colonel's lady mightily while the books aimed at the Colonel's lady vanish into the great limbo of the un-read.

The general level, however, rises perceptibly year by year. Whether public demand forces the publishers into publishing better books or whether the publishers are educating the reading public to better things remains an open question with the answer depending upon the angle from which the question is viewed. Some wag has observed that it won't be long before a book reader will be as rare a thing as the dodo because everyone, be he bank president or be he hod carrier, has produced or is producing a great masterpiece of his own which only awaits a properly discriminating publisher. To those few of us who still are content to read what others have written the current season offers much to please.

Let's glance briefly at some of the high spots in the season's fiction. Far up in the van rides Willa Cather's new novel, THE PROFESSOR'S HOUSE; a book of infinite suggestion. Never has Miss Cather's limpid style been more beautiful. As a story it is fascinating, as a commentary on modern civilized life it is subtle and profound. In this book there are passages which, as one of our friends has observed, stand out as though printed in fifteen foot type. . . . . There's DARK LAUGHTER if you happen to like Sherwood Anderson. It is Anderson at his best if, as we said before, you like Anderson. We don't. . . . . It is odd that SAMUEL DRUMMOND by Thomas Boyd has not made more of a stir locally. Boyd is steadily improving and he has here produced a solid novel, significant and sane. Besides it's locale is in the Maumee Valley in the vicinity of Defiance, local color figuring prominently and correctly in the story. There is sort of a pleasant thrill in reading that Samuel took his blushing bride to Toledo upon their honeymoon where they were somewhat overawed by the magnificence of the Oliver House. . . . . H. G. Wells is always stimulating even when he is trying to create a new world over night. In CHRISTINA ALBERTA'S FATHER he is the old Wells, the Wells of the immortal Mr. Polly. It's a jaded reader who won't like the queer but lovable little Mr. Preemby. After the hors d'oeuvres of Van Vechten, Arlen, Firbank, et. al., it is a solid delight to sink your teeth into old liver and onions Wells. . . . . For good stories well told take THE PERENNIAL BACHELOR by Anne Parrish and THE CHICKEN WAGON FAMILY by Barry Benefield. The first is a fragrant thing commencing, according to one discerning re-

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viewer, like Louisa Alcott and ending like Thomas Hardy. It is a skillful etching of several decades in the life of a Delaware family. There is a touch of Barrie's whimsy in the chronicle of the Chicken Wagon Family, of its exodus from Louisiana to New York City, its arrival and drive down Broadway behind those knowing mules Kit and Luce, its ultimate establishment in an abandoned fire engine house and papa Fippany's misbehavior. . . . . There is fragile and delicate beauty and much good writing in THE VENETIAN GLASS NEPHEW by Elinor Wylie. . . . . Hugh Walpole calls his new one PORTRAIT OF A MAN WITH RED HAIR and sub-titles it A Romantic Macabre. It is precisely that and should not be undertaken late at night unless you are indifferent as to the time you roll into bed. . . . . If you are an A. S. M. Hutchinson addict you may like ONE INCREASING PURPOSE. If not—well, read a few pages before you buy. In this book Hutchinson carries all of his stylistic faults to the Nth degree. The book is turgid, absurd and maudlin in the bargain.

Nor does that by any means exhaust the list. More good things have been left out than included. More good things are to come and will perhaps be here by the time this reaches print. We anticipate another light-hearted yarn

rom Elmer Davis in FRIENDS OF MR. SWEENY, Christopher Morley's publishers are hightily press agenting his new THUNDER ON THE LEFT. There will be CLARA BARRON by Harvey O'Higgins, THE ELDER SISTER by Frank Swinnerton and BREAD AND CIRCUSES by W. E. Woodward, the author of the inimitable LOTTERY.

Among non-fiction publications few approach in importance Dr. Bower's JEFFERSON AND HAMILTON: THE STRUGGLE FOR DEMOCRACY IN AMERICA. The story of the conflict between the political philosophies of those two great Americans should prove absorbing. John Macy's STORY OF THE WORLD'S LITERATURE is just out. In format it is a beautiful book and the name of its distinguished author guarantees solid worth.

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WHAT'S A GOOD BOOK

By R. F. NACHTRIEB

WITH an avalanche of fall books threatening to bury the average reader and not only bury but bankrupt the inveterate book buyer Winter, with a fine compensatory gesture, decided upon an advanced schedule. The long winter evenings, so prematurely established, contributed to the hope that before the publishers' spring onslaught the A. R. could at least catch up with the cream of the fall publications. A close bond of sympathy undoubtedly exists between the book publisher and the coal dealer. We picture those worthies genuflecting piously before the thermometer every time it starts one of it's characteristic descents. Add a touch of sleet or snow to the picture and it is not hard to fancy that a Saturnalian revel ensues because bad weather is a powerful deterrent to the gadding instinct and when one stays at home one does, perhaps, read.

Some there be who content themselves with one book at a time from a public or lending library and they patronize those praiseworthy institutions with admirable regularity. But can the book reader, no matter how regular, be considered a true book-lover unless he be, mildly at least, a bibliomaniac as well. We have always thought that the dyed in the wool book-lover derives one of his keenest pleasures, and anticipatory pleasures are the keenest, from his unread books. Arnold Bennett developed one of his charming essays around that theme and only the other day we heard Dr. John Murphy, who is one of Toledo's most discriminating book buyers, express a kindred sentiment. Your true book-lover often buys books with no thought of immediate consumption; he knows he wants to read them sometime and he wants them at his hand when that time comes. Sometimes, it is painful to relate, that time never comes and the neglected volume fulfills it's destiny in a Salvation Army van. However, let a borrowing friend, who has been urged to select freely from his shelves, show an inclination towards one of those unread and half forgotten volumes and the B. L.'s anguish is distressingly apparent. He feels sure that he was just about to read that particular book and his friend is selecting it for the sole purpose of annoying him. Politely but with a sinking heart he relinquishes the treasure; it is returned with reasonable promptitude and goes back upon the shelf to gather dust until the next borrower arouses anew that dreadful agitation. Yes, your book-lover is a strange animal and his ways are inscrutable.

Parenthetically we would like to add a word about what Miss Laura Koch is accomplishing in the book shop at Lasalles. The book business is a hard and trying one, the tribulations are great and the rewards are small. Miss Koch, with courage and optimism, is creating a real book shop and her increasing clientele shows that her efforts are being recognized. We venture the guess that you might ask her for Osborn's MEN OF THE OLD STONE AGE or Frazer's THE GOLDEN BOUGH and she would be able to pro-

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duce them—a condition that has not always existed in Toledo book stores. She has recently imported from England some exquisite specimens of the book binder's art which you should ask to see. She is, we are told, quite an authority on children's books.

If you are looking for some light hearted fooling try MISCHIEF by Ben Travers. He has almost shaken P. G. Wodehouse from the pedestal upon which we placed him when we first read one of his gay yarns . . . . . To say that Booth Tarkington has a new one called WOMEN is enough for Tarkington fans. The critics say that it is good. . . . . POSSESSION by Louis Bromfield carries on with many of the characters who figured in his first novel, THE GREEN BAY TREE. There is nothing impressionistic about Bromfield. His book is solidly conceived and solidly worked out, of more than usual length but meaty all the way . . . . . It does not seem that Harry Leon Wilson has ever been accorded the place to which he is entitled in American letters. He has created a gallery of portraits that are well nigh deathless. Who can soon forget Bunker Bean, Ruggles, Ma Pettingill, Merton and the immortal Cousin Egbert. His recently published COUSIN JANE is nearly as funny as the earlier books and it has a new depth and poignancy - - - - - BREAD AND CIRCUSES is now out and if you enjoyed Woodward's keen satire in BUNK and LOTTERY you need only be told that he has lost none of his diabolic ability to expose bunk - - - - - Christopher Morley's THUNDER ON THE LEFT is also out. It was worth waiting for, sensitively beautiful and even better than that little gem WHERE THE BLUE BEGINS - - - - -

The above are all new books. Here are three that are by no means new and only one is of a comparatively recent date but if you happened to have missed them you have a treat in store for you if you beg, borrow, buy or steal JOANNA GODDEN by Shelia Kaye-Smith, A ROOM WITH A VIEW by E. M. Forster and OF HUMAN BONDAGE by Somerset Maugham.

In the field of non-fiction we recommend the third volume of PAGE'S LETTERS - - - MORE CHANGES—MORE CHANCES by H. W. Nevinson which contains interesting reminiscences and word pictures and much very fine writing - - - - - RELEASED FOR PUBLICATION by O. K. Davis which gives much fascinating inside information about the famous Progressive Convention of 1912 and paints a delightful intimate picture of Theodore Roosevelt - - - - - THE TRAGEDY OF WASTE by Stuart Chase, a discussion of the waste in our modern economic processes which is as readable as a novel and of course more thought-provoking and WHAT'S O'CLOCK the posthumous volume of Amy Lowell's last verse. It contains some of her most beautiful imagery. Even though you have been incapable of enjoying Amy Lowell take another chance on this one. Ten to one that you capitulate.

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WHAT'S A GOOD BOOK

By R. F. NACHTRIEB

WHILE there are hundreds of books which probably deserve attention there is, for us, but one book which at present commands attention—a book so powerful, so tremendous, so awful that this reader, having just finished it feels quite shaken and unable to attempt any further reading until time has somewhat mitigated its grim influence.

That book is "AN AMERICAN TRAGEDY" by Theodore Dreiser. (Two volumes. 840 pp. Boni and Liveright. $5.)

Mr. Dreiser has here produced his first novel in eleven years and he has been, we can well imagine, no little trial to his publishers for it seems to us that the book's announcement and postponement has been an almost periodic occurrence during the last year or so. But, finally published, how rich a reward for the delay! What a book!

In "An American Tragedy" Mr. Dreiser presents the life history of a vain, weak, tragic youth, Clyde Griffiths, the son of a shabby street preacher in Kansas City. Reared in the depressing atmosphere of his father's Mission and forced to go upon the streets nightly with his parents for gospel meetings he rebels and secures employment as a soda clerk in a drug store and later as a bellboy in a Kansas City hotel.

The hotel life is a glamorous one for Clyde, the sophisticated companionship of his bellhop associates new and strange. He figures in a disastrous automobile accident and runs away from the consequences drifting to Chicago where he becomes, eventually, a bellboy in the Union League Club. Here, after a few months, he encounters an uncle of whose existence he was only dimly aware. The uncle, a wealthy collar manufacturer of Lycurgus, N. Y. offers the boy employment in a minor capacity in his factory.

The Lycurgus branch of the Griffiths family, socially prominent and social climbers, refuses to have anything to do with the youth and he is left to his own devices. Lonely, sentimental, young, inexperienced and highly sexed the almost inevitable happens. He becomes enamoured with Roberta Alden, a young woman working in his department at the factory, and owing to his uncle's rule which prohibits association of department heads with employes he is forced to meet her clandestinely. Intimacy results. At about the same time, however, the social set in the town takes Clyde up for various reasons and he becomes infatuated with one of its most engaging and picturesque flappers, Sondra Finchley. His head completely turned he visions great things for himself and decides to cut loose from Roberta who no longer seems so desirable only to discover that she is pregnant and is commencing to insist that he do something. Frightened and harassed Clyde allows matters to drift for a time. At last one day on a boating trip Roberta is drowned under

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suspicious circumstances and the finger of suspicion points to her companion who is discovered to be Clyde. He is apprehended, tried, convicted and executed.

A sordid enough story and one that may be found duplicated in almost any daily newspaper. But Mr. Dreiser with relentless truth and great compassion seeks out every hidden motive, every complex force and tries not only Clyde Griffiths but modern civilization as well. The force of the author's fearlessness, veracity and pity hangs over the entire story. He holds no brief for any of his characters but tells his story with stern detachment and an ironic pity.

Much has been said of Mr. Dreiser's style. He has been called a "lumbering dinosaur" of literature. Sherwood Anderson has said that Dreiser's disregard for the beauty of words has made him cringe. Dr. Sherman refers to his "huge plantigrade tread." They all concede his stylistic faults and yet pay homage to him as one of the most important, if not the most important, Americans writing. It is his huge tenderness and great love of humanity and life that impresses.

Nearly the entire second volume of the novel is devoted to Clyde's trial and imprisonment and so successfully does Mr. Dreiser make one understand Clyde and his problems that the cumulative effect is terrific. The reader suffers through that trial and winces through that pathetic life in the death house. There are few finer things in all literature than the story of Clyde's mother's distracted and frantic attempts to save her son although with her stern moral fibre she cannot fully convince herself of his innocence.

WHAT'S A GOOD BOOK

By R. F. NACHTRIEB

A Glance Behind and a Squint Ahead

THERE used to be a Fall publishing season and a Spring publishing season. Technically such a division still exists but actually the tail of the Fall season has hardly disappeared around the corner of Christmas before the Spring books come galloping in. Even the enterprising milliner, whose Spring headgear for women is generally put on display during the worst blizzard of Winter, is outdistanced. Still a hiatus, or some simulacrum of a hiatus, exists and during this short recess it might be well to mention a handful of the recent books which you may have overlooked.

W. E. Woodward did not quite duplicate in "BREAD AND CIRCUSES" the success of his earlier books "BUNK" and "LOTTERY" but Woodward second rate is head and shoulders above most of the other American satirists. This latest book is rather rambling and spotty but it contains enough wit and pungent observation to make it well worth while. If you haven't read "FRIENDS OF MR. SWEENY" by Elmer Davis you have missed a remarkably clever light novel; clever in plot, bright and racy in dialogue. It is good for two or three hours of delighted chuckles. Towering far above American novels of this year and of many years past stands the book which we mentioned in TOLEDO TOPICS last month—"AN AMERICAN TRAGEDY" by Theodore Dreiser. Miss Wells of the Public Library who is one of the keenest judges of literary merit in Toledo likens it to Dostoevski's great "CRIME AND PUNISHMENT." It is continuously interesting and continuously terrible and if it gets under your skin at all it will stir you mightily. Only the hardened or indifferent reader will fail to receive from this monumental work the benefit of a heightened tolerance and understanding. Incidentally the limited edition which is autographed by the author is an excellent piece of book making and is much sought after. Lord Grey's TWENTY FIVE YEARS" is still a steady seller in the non-fiction class and deserves its popularity. It is a dignified record of a dignified carreer. Count Herman Keyserling's "TRAVEL DIARY OF A PHILOSOPHER" provides a remarkably rich contact with a brilliant mind. We are informed that this solid work has found its way into many Toledo libraries. George A. Dorsey's "WHY WE BEHAVE LIKE HUMAN BEINGS" is a fascinating storehouse of well digested information on anthropology, behaviorism, evolution, the endocrine glands, the processes of living and kindred subjects. It is published in Harper's Modern Science Series and is a worthy companion to its admirable fore-runners.

Among the books just published are several noteworthy volumes. Margherita G. Sarfatti's "LIFE OF BENITO MUSSOLINI" is more or less of an official biography and consequently canonizes "Il Duce" to the queen's taste. In the attractive Blue Jade Library Alfred A. Knopf has reissued "RACHAEL MARR" by Morley Roberts, a passionate and intense love story that is as powerful today as it was when it was first published twenty or more years ago. Sarah G. Millin, author of "GOD'S STEPCHILDREN" has written another story of South African life in "MARY GLENN." The excellence of the earlier book should win this latest novel a wide audience. The popular Fanny Hurst's "APPASSIONATA" has been out for a few weeks and has received a mixed reception. Miss Hurst's exclamatory style has intensified to the point of grotesqueness. The name of Francis Brett Young on the title page of a book guarantees delicate writing and a gift for narrative. His "DARK TOWER" has just been published in this country although it made its first appearance in England in 1914. "THREE KINGDOMS" by Storm Jameson has just arrived and from a hasty examination we conclude that it is as romantic and as glamourous as "THE PITIFUL WIFE." D. H. Lawrence has a new one called "THE PLUMED SERPENT" which will appeal to those who like Lawrence's stuff. If it is a return to the Lawrence who wrote "SONS AND LOVERS" it should be well worth your attention, if it is the later Lawrence you will probably find it nauseating. "LATER DAYS" is a charming autobiographical narrative by W. H. Davies, author of "The Autobiography of a Super Tramp" and, what is more important, author of some of the lovliest lyrics in modern English.

Among the books announced for early publication are "THE SILVER STALLION" by James Branch Cabell (May 12th)—tthe last of the Poictesme cycle; "ODDTA" by John Masefield (April)—another shilling shocker in gorgeous prose; "ALL THE SAD YOUNG MEN" by Scott Fitzgerald—a collection of short stories in the manner of "THE GREAT GATSBY."

Perhaps the two most important books of the Spring will be "ABRAHAM LINCOLN: THE PRAIRIE YEARS" by Carl Sandburg and "THE INTIMATE DIARIES OF COLONEL HOUSE." Sandburg's book will be out by the time this reaches you, the House book is announced for March 5th. It is the unanimous opinion of critics who have reviewed advance copies of Sandburg's book that there could have been no happier combination of author and subject. The prairie poet does not concern himself with the Lincoln of history—the book ends with Lincoln's election to the Presidency. He has brought his understanding and genius to bear upon "the folk-lore Lincoln, the maker of stories, the stalking and elusive Lincoln. . . . . the prairie lawyer and country politician." The Colonel House book, judging from fragments that have been syndicated to the newspapers, will tell much of the inside story of the Wilson administration. It will appeal particularly to all students of contemporary history. Frank political memoirs are always intensely interesting and those of the mysterious Colonel House should prove particularly fascinating.

What's A Good Book

By R. F. Nachtrieb.

WITHIN the compass of a brief article such as this it is difficult to pick from the extraordinarily complete list of new books a certain limited number and to suggest that you give preference to that selection. It is so largely, as the old lady said in explaining her strange affection for her bovine companion, a matter of taste. Every publishing season has its four or five outstanding achievements, books that are known and discussed in every civilized household. Within this category would undoubtedly fall The Intimate Papers of Colonel House, Carl Sandburg's Abraham Lincoln and Dreiser's An American Tragedy—all of which are already too well known to require further mention. Closely following come Willa Cather's The Professor's House, Christopher Morley's Thunder On The Left, John Erskine's Private Life of Helen of Troy and Professor Dorsey's Why We Behave Like Human Beings. Miss Cather's book is being boomed for the Pulitzer prize and bids fair to win it. We were puzzled and thrilled by Thunder On The Left. It is a strange combination of fantasy, allegory, philosophy and humor in parts as poignantly beautiful as Barrie and in parts as mystifying as Algernon Blackwood. We doubt whether Morley himself knows what it all means but anyone who can write so exquisitely can be forgiven much. The Private Life of Helen of Troy is a capital book but it can hardly be called a novel. It is a series of delightfully witty dialogues between Helen and her outraged (and outrageous) husband, Helen and her very righteous and annoying daughter and Helen and a philosophic gate keeper. What action there is takes place after the fall of Troy and Helen instead of being a chastened and penitent woman is completely the mistress of herself and the situation. Professor Erskine, through Helen, expresses himself with so much iconoclastic wit that Bernard Shaw, if he has read the book, must have turned a pale green with envy. All of these books are undoubtedly already well known to readers of TOLEDO TOPICS. Their Toledo sales have been very large.

HAVE you read THIS IS THE LIFE by Walt McDougall? It is a jolly autobiography by the famous cartoonist of the New York World. Walt loved life, good companionship and, quite obviously, good liquor. His yarn is told in an easy conversational style which leaves you with the impression of having chatted with a charming old fellow who has known intimately most of the illustrious figures of his day and who is as full of good stories as a Dago's chestnut is full of worms. Some of his stories, it must be admitted, have a slight chestnutty flavor but who can blame a born raconteur for lifting a yarn here and there, especially if it is a good one?

AMONG the recent novels which seem to be worth reading can be mentioned Jerico Sands by Mary Borden, Cloud Cuckoo Land by Naomi Mitchison—a startlingly vivid re-creation of the days of ancient Athens and Sparta and an unusually sound piece of historical fiction—Clara Barron by Harvey O'Higgins—another one of O'Higgins psychological studies—Teeftallow by T. S. Stribling—a realistic story of the South and far removed from the South of the old-fashioned story books—Pig Iron by Charles G. Norris—which is stodgily thorough and thoroughly stodgy and, like all of Mr. Norris' books, just misses being first class—The Diary Of A Young Lady Of Fashion In The Year 1764-65 by Cleone Knox—indubitably a hoax but a very clever and daring hoax—Gentlemen Prefer Blondes by Anita Loos—one of the genuinely funny books of the season, the intimate diary of a beautiful moron, a gold-digger destined for the "fillums"—The Hounds Of Spring by Sylvia Thompson—a novel of great promise by a young English girl, of the Great War and its effect on the youth of England—Spanish Bayonet by Stephen Vincent Benet—a romantic tale of Florida during the revolution by a poet with the gift of writing colorful prose—and Mary Glenn by Sarah Gertrude Millin—another of Mrs. Millin's stories of Africa, stark, intense, powerful.

THE short story field is perhaps led by Scott Fitzgerald with his All The Sad Young Men. Fitzgerald is surely to be reckoned with, each of his books represents an advance over the one preceding. The first story in this book, "Rich Boy", is a haunting thing. In fact there is hardly a story in the book but what is worth reading. Wilbur Daniel Steele has a new volume of short stories called Urkey Island. We have not had a chance to examine it yet but we are inclined to think that anyone who can write so compelling a book as Taboo merits attention.

OUTSIDE the fiction field there is Microbe Hunteres by Paul DeKruif—a fascinating account of the lives and exploits of a dozen bacteriologists. De Kruif writes in a breezy journalistic style and his book is as entertaining as fiction. Incidentally De Kruif is the man who collaborated with Sinclair Lewis on the medical phases of Arrowsmith. Dr. Stuart Sherman has a new book called Critical Woodcuts—brilliant literary essays by one of the sanest and most liberal critics in America, and Gamaliel Bradford is represented with A Naturalist of Souls—a new and enlarged edition of one of Mr. Bradford's earlier volumes of psychographs. Bradford is at last coming into his own but only after Lytton Strachey became famous by employing a method which had been Bradford's for years.

AMONG the books which have not yet put in their appearance we look forward to Fathers of the Revolution, by Philip Guedalla, Richard Kane Looks At Life, by Irwin Edman, The Love Nest and Other Stories, by Ring Lardner, Rough Justice by C. E. Montague, The Sacred Tree, by lady Murasaki (a continuation of the delightful Tale of Genji), and Mantrap, by Sinclair Lewis.

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What's a Good Book?

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IN case you are sceptical of the new books and want to be sure that your reading matter, like your drinking matter, has been tested may we suggest that if you have never read Peter Ibbetson by DuMaurier you have missed one of the most beautiful and glamourous romances in modern English and if you have never read Gogol's Taras Bulba you have missed one of the world's greatest books—a tale of the Cossacks so powerful and so great that translation cannot harm it.

What's A Good Book

By R. F. NACHTRIEB.

ALTHOUGH this is the day of the psychological novel and the psychopathic study, of literary probing into neuroses, repressions, inhibitions and the sub-conscious, of sex ad infinitum and ad nauseum, there still exists an eager public and a ready sale for stories of adventure and romance. Stephen Vincent Benet has written a story of the latter kind in SPANISH BAYONET, a thrilling historical romance of Florida during the days of the Revolution. Mr. Benet, like Mr. Masefield and Mrs. Wylie, is a poet who has turned his poetic gifts to prose composition with extraordinarily happy results. There are pages of sheer beauty quite unusual in a book of swiftly moving action and adventure.

* * *

LOVERS of fine prose cannot help but have thrilled at the announcement that Donn Byrne is about to publish a new romance entitled HANGMAN'S HOUSE. According to the publisher's announcement it is "a story of brave hearts which never falter, of leprechauns and revolutionaries, of steeple chases and fox hunts, of the Shan Van Vogt and French officers, of the fighting which strong men do with their hands." In short it sounds like a true Donn Byrne romance and no doubt he has once more woven that magic spell which cast enchantment over the thousands of readers of Messer Marco Polo.

* * *

A SOMEWHAT similar spell is cast by Sylvia Warner in the charming LOLLY WILLOWES. Here is a delicate fantastic story wrought with a jeweler's precision and with an uncanny power of evoking those fleeting and inarticulate moods of which we are only half conscious; moods so evanescent that only the pen of an artist can fix them. To anyone who enthuses over perfect expression this book is heartily recommended.

* * *

ONE of the sanest and soundest of the psychological novels is CLARA BARRON, by Harvey O'Higgins. It is a compactly written story which, in spite of its brevity, presents an authentic and remarkably well rounded portrait of an emotionally inhibited woman. The character of the protagonist of the story is neither absurd nor over-drawn. Clara Barron is a perfectly comprehensible individual whose tragedy is that she is unable to yield to human impulses.

THOSE who own and delight in the exotic TALE OF GENJI have no doubt long since bought or stolen THE SACRED TREE, which is the second volume of that great Japanese novel.—Admirers of biographical fiction will find a splendid example of that type of fiction in VERDI, by Franz Werfel, whose Goat Song has been such a great success on the New York stage.—IT'S NOT DONE, by William C. Bullitt is a new novel by a new author which we have not yet examined but it is drawing an enthusiastic press and is, no doubt, well worth attention.—WHOM GOD HATH SUNDERED is a publication in a single volume of three connected novels by Oliver Onions, an English writer of great distinction who has never achieved the American audience he is entitled to.

* * *

THE new publishing house of Greenberg is issuing a fascinating series called "The Rogue's Bookshelf," a collection of "the most celebrated stories of thieves, gamblers, highwaymen, swindlers, debauchees—jolly rascals of every description—in the vital works of the greatest masters of story telling in the world's literature." The series is attractive in make-up, nicely printed and strikingly bound. Lovers of picaresque fiction will find in these books many of the lesser known masterpieces which are so frequently unobtainable in anything but subscription editions.

* * *

THE MAUVE DECADE, by Thomas Beer, after numerous postponements, is at last on the book stalls. It is a synthesis and study of the late Victorian era; of the "gay nineties" which have drawn so much remiscent attention lately—a study brilliant, penetrating and subtle. In format the book is exquisite with its superb printing and glazed mauve covers.

* * *

LET it be noted for the benefit of those who still remember something of the Great War that two remarkable war books have just been published—FIX BAYONETS, by John W. Thomason, Jr., and THROUGH THE FLAME, by Hervey Allen. Both are excellent. FIX BAYONETS is illustrated with splendid pencil sketches by its author. In neither of these books is War romanticized nor is its horror glossed over, yet both, by preserving proper proportion and perspective, carry conviction and vividly present that most futile and at the same time most glamorous of human institutions.

The Best of the New Books

By Mrs. Robert C. Morris

ALL Gaul was divided into three parts, and all the modern world of readers may be divided into three classes,—those who like "Thunder On The Left," those who do not, and those who have not read it but are going to. (Bye and bye, of course, there won't be anyone left in that third class at all.) I'm not going to talk today about Christopher Morley's fantasy,—this magazine is so limited in space! But here is a new book that reminds me of Thunder On The Left—not in content, plot, characters or background, but in those intangible, subtle, indefinable qualities of spirit and of magic that make you catch your breath. "Miss Tiverton Goes Out" is written by an English woman, and the most remarkable thing about this remarkable story is that anyone, having written it, could keep her identity secret. If I had written it, I should want to have my name blazoned in seven primary colors on the jacket. Anonymity intrigues the imagination. I wonder which one, of all the English women writers, could have conceived this b e a u t i f u l thing?

I'm sorry I read it last week, because I might have extended those magic hours over a longer period of time. Why didn't I read just a chapter a day, and so spread a garment of beauty over all the coming summer?

So, I beg of you, reduce your speed limit to ten pages an hour when you open this book, go 'way off by yourself, call back yesterday, invite the little girl or the little boy you used to be to return.

DID you ever see an ancient tree, an old garden, a foot-beaten path twisting up a mountain side, the door of a house through which life has passed for four generations, or a grave so old that even its stone has been absorbed again into Mother Earth? Well, did these "old, far-off forgotten things "bring to mind the phrase "time immemorial," and give you a sad kind of pleasure? If so, I am glad to introduce you to Juliet Simpson.—No, I should have said to Juliet, because she wanted, more than anything else, to be just Juliet, just herself. The name Juliet Simpson combined, cribbed and confined her in the Simpson family. Among the Simpsons there was another seeker after freedom—there was Olive who wanted only "realness"—"And I'm jolly well going to get it, too, whatever anybody says." Angela, however, was one of the several "shams" in the Simpson family. She wanted young Mr. Lethbridge, the vicar. Blunt speaking Olive advised Angela "The best thing you can do is to take him into the summer-house sometime and have Doubts."

JULIET'S father was a speculator in real estate, a sort of English Babbitt who uprooted trees that had been growing since time immemorial, and who erected hideous brand new houses in places where for a-many a hundred summers ancient oaks and elms had spread their lovely shade.

The Simpsons' lived in a strictly modern, up-to-the-last-minute house, a house much admired by Mr. and Mrs. Simpson. But Juliet didn't like it! She astounded her family by declaring, "I don't think ours is a beautiful house at all. I don't think magenta satin cushions, or electric light, or flower-beds full of hyacinths one day and tulips the next are beautiful. It's all so unmysterious. You can see everything there is. I like houses and gardens where there's things you don't see, old things that have got a history shut up inside them, things that belong to time immemorial."

Cousin Maude told Juliet, "The glory of life is for anyone. People have different names for it. I myself should call it vision,—a certain way of seeing things."

Said grown-up Juliet to her lover, convalescing from a war wound, as one day they sat together on a fallen tree-trunk at the edge of the beech-wood, "The war's going on somewhere. But you can't hear it—you can't see it. What you do hear and see is so much bigger,—the sky over there, and the leaves falling,—things that have been happening forever and ever."

(Continued on page 40)

Introducing Two New Contributors

IN this issue Toledo Topics introduces two new contributors to its readers, Mrs. Robert C. Morris, who will conduct the book review department, and Wynn, whose clever sketches are known the country over. Mrs. Morris is Toledo's best known book authority and an internationally recognized student of Shakespeare. She has a recognized literary judgement, seasoned and mature. She addresses seven or eight hundred women fornightly in her book reviews given in the First Church community hall and has for more than a score of years conducted classes in Shakespeare in Toledo. She is a college woman, a lecturer of distinction and a woman of broad and sympathetic outlook. Wynn's drawings should be of unusual interest to Toledoans in-as-much as he is really a Toledo boy, Wynn Holcomb being his full name. He was named after his maternal grandfather, S. C. Wynn, who was in his day a leading commercial magnate here. Wynn spent most of his babyhood in his grandfather's house on 17th street near Madison, and nearly every summer on his grandfather's farm on the lake front near Bay View Park. He is now making a supplementary tour of the Mediterranean after spending a year in Paris and the winter in Nice and Monte Carlo. He is now heading for Algiers. Wynn is a monthly contributor to The Spur and other magazines and often draws theatrical celebrities for the New York Times and Herald-Tribune. Toledo Topics congratulates itself upon being able to offer the works of such noted people to its readers.

The Best of the New Books

(Continued from page 18)

Before the story ends, Angela achieves a degree of vision, although we leave her still clutching the garment of sham that hides her spiritual nakedness. Angela was always horribly afraid during an air-raid. "I feel as if—as if there was so little of me that I might get crushed out by mistake, though I'm full of possibilities."

* * *

OLIVE found the "realness" that, even as a child, had been her goal. "Being married to Harry taught me that realness, or life, or whatever you choose to call it, is ever so much bigger even than the love of man and woman. Love may be a way of getting it, but it can't be the only way."

Juliet's father violently opposed everything of which their neighbor, Miss Tiverton, was a symbol. Excited and angered because he could not buy her land and "improve" it, he swore that when she died he would build "flats, and a cinema, and a public house all at once on her grave."

Miss Tiverton, whose personality and traditions set the key-note of the story, strangely enough never enters the story as a character, although her essence pervades the tale. Ah yes! Miss Tiverton does go out just once, in the very last chapter. And there, I think, you may enjoy six pages of writing as beautiful, as exquisite, as moving as any you have read for, lo, these many moons.

* * *

ALL the world loves very, very young lovers. Why is it that the love affairs of the middle-aged always seem a little absurd? Young lovers bring tears to the eyes, but elderly sweethearts provoke a grin. In her new novel, "After Noon," Susan Ertz traces the course of the true love of a middle-aged couple. Of course it isn't so good a novel as "Madame Claire,"—no story could conceivably measure up to that one, but it is a good story, nevertheless. The characters are charming and convincing, they "come alive," they are admirably contrasted. It's always a pity when a writer strikes twelve too early in his career. People are always saying "This book is not so fine as that earlier one." Charles Lester had been deserted by his wife, Brenda, twenty years before the real story begins. Even worse, Brenda had deserted their twin daughters. But, as Shakespeare wrote, "There is some soul of goodness in things evil," and we are increasingly glad, as we read these chapters, that Brenda misconducted herself long ago because, if she had stayed with her family, the story might have lacked much of its charm. As it is, the story of Charles Lester's second love affair coasts perilously near the edge of tragedy. He loved Lydia, the American widow, but he was afraid of marriage; afraid that history might repeat itself and that again a wife might leave him. And she almost did!

* * *

SUSAN Ertz puts sentences on every page that you would like to quote. Here are a few from "After Noon"—"Social functions were devised by women in order that they should be seen by as many people as possible at the moment when they are looking their best."—"Single dullness is agreeable, married dullness is awful."—"I tell you I dreaded marriage and feared it. It's only the young who don't."—"No more misunderstandings. At our age surely they are avoidable. If youth knew, if age could! Well, middle age knows, and does, thank God. A perfect state of things!"

* * *

HAVE you read "Pig Iron," by Charles G. Norris? I always experience a little thrill when I begin a new story by any one of the Norris's because I read "The Pit" by Frank Norris when it was first published. I suppose critics measure every intellectual effort of the Norris family by that famous tale of the later 1890's. It must be very, very pathetic to be Theodore Roosevelt's son, or Carrie Chapman-Colt's husband, or to have been William Shakespeare's brother! In certain particulars "Pig Iron" is strikingly like Dreiser's "An American Tragedy." In each, the chief character is a boy bred in the bleak atmosphere of rigid piety and stark poverty. Both Clyde and Sam fall in love with unfortunate girls who are victims of sordid environment. When I had read one-third of this book I said to myself, "This story is dull and heavy and sodden. 'Pig Iron' is an appropriate title." But, perhaps, I was tired. You see, I had just gone to the electric chair with Dreiser's Clyde. I had plodded through every dreadful detail on every harrowing page, moving slowly and relentlessly toward unavoidable doom. Only an artist could compel me to do that! Well, along about page 350 "Pig Iron" begins to get hold of you in just the same way. You all know the hero, Sam Smith, in real life. He lives in every American town. He is sixty, he is fat, he is somewhat disappointed in his children, his wife tolerates him, his business associates fear him, he is very, very rich. Sam Smith knows that he was happy once,—forty years ago, when he had not a dollar in his pocket, but when life was crowded full of dreams, love, hope, adventure. Why did he have to lose them all on the road to sixty years?

* * *

IN my judgment "Prairie," by Walter J. Muhlinberg, is the best novel of American life published in many years. It is not a pleasant story, but it is a work of art. In scriptural simplicity of style it will remind you of Knut Hamsum's "Growth of the Soil." It is classic in essence, harking back to the old idea of Fate expressed in Greek Tragedy. There are three conflicts,—the conflict of father and son in three generations, each man's inner struggle with the forces of his own nature, and their fight when each man sets his indomitable will to conquer the stubborn soil. The story is clean, cold, powerful and tragic and is likely to find a place among the few great sagas of the soil of the mid-west.

Grant Overton says that a truly great novel is "a beacon, not a bonfire." Nearly all the best-sellers belong to the bonfire class, but they make a great flare and noise, and we are obliged to turn our attention to them. And they are not wholly without value,—for in their momentary blaze we may catch a glimpse of some truth of human life that we never saw before. And it will be interesting, ten years from now, to observe that one novel, published in 1926, has taken its permanent place among the great beacon lights of the world of fiction. Which shall it be?

———oo———

The Best of the New Books

By Mrs. Robert C. Morris

THIS month we celebrate Independence Day. During the summer many of us will visit Ben Franklin's old home town on the banks of the Schuylkill and wander among the varied attractions of the Sesqui-Centennial Exposition. But here is a new book which throws a strong searchlight upon the reiterated claim of independence, a book which is likely, as Hamlet said, to "give us pause" in the midst of our hurrahing. This book will disturb the complacent mood in which we protest that we can get along without Europe, Asia and South America, and that we are sufficient unto ourselves.

"Dependent America" is not written by a red, or a bolshevist, but by a sane and solid patriot, William C. Redfield, once Secretary of Commerce. Every thinking citizen should read this iconoclastic book, for therein he will discover that much of our glorious prosperity depends upon the importation by our manufacturers of hundreds of substances from the four corners of the earth. Even in war time, national defense depends upon certain things obtained from distant lands.

The United States is like a great bakery which buys flour, salt, sugar, yeast, milk and converts these ingredients into loaves which are distributed far and wide. We are the inventors of machinery, the makers of all sorts of things, but other countries contribute innumerable Essentials that we do not produce.

"Independence forever!" it's a great slogan. But when the tumult and the shouting dies, it is just as well to temper enthusiasm with the truth and sanity of the statements in Mr. Redfield's book. In these authoritative pages we learn how very much of our own national prosperity, as well as the prosperity of other nations, depend upon international give and take."

* * *

ANNUALLY many Toledoans take the long, long trail to the Pacific coast, so I feel confident that readers of this magazine will be interested in "The Aristocratic West," by Katherine Fuller Gerauld. According to Mrs. Gerauld the far west is not now and never was wild, woolly, untamed and crude. Out where the west begins and beyond that mythical location, dwell "the only true aristocrats left in America:" Mrs. Gerauld declares that the characteristics of the average man in those favored regions demonstrate the truth of her claim, they are chivalrous in their attitude to all women, they have the best manners in the world, they are sincerely solicitous for the stranger's comfort, they are without affection, courageous, dignified.

The pioneers who developed the west were gentlemen who averaged five feet, eleven inches in height, one hundred and sixty-four pounds in weight, they were "made of watch-springs, whale-bone and dynamite." A pioneer could not buy his neighbor's respect on account of his ancestry or his money, he proved himself worthy of it. George Washington and Thomas Jefferson have faded from the picture everywhere east of Denver, but their prototypes are still to be found west of the Rockies.

* * *

HAVE you a hobby? Then you will enjoy at least one of the following new books:—"The Spell of the Turf" is written by S. C. Hildreth and J. R. Crowell. Lovers of horse-flesh will enjoy the well-told incidents and the fine illustrations.

A sport-novel guaranteed to rivet your attention is "The Trail of Glory," the exciting career of a tennis champion.

If you are unable to take Horace Greeley's advice this summer, you may enjoy adventure vicariously in "High Country," Containing stirring sketches of the Rocky Mountain country by Courtney Ryley Cooper. This is a book par excellence for nature-lovers, hunters, fishermen, seekers of attitude, wide spaces, beckoning horizons.

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The Magic Pipe

They've fashioned your bowl from an old brier root,
Many the year laid by.
Mellowed by time through the age that it took
Deep in the ground to lie
They've modeled your stem from the juice of a tree,
Frozen an amber hue,
Hidden away in the depth of the sea,
Cast it ashore for you

Fill up the bowl with the leaf of the earth,
Crop of a fruitful year;
Symbol of harvest and sign of birth,
Courage and hope and cheer
Light with the fire that glows within,
All of life's journey through,
Scatter the smoke to the vagrant breeze,
Bringing fine thoughts to you

—*Alan R. Fernald*

The Best of the New Books

continued from page 38

Several years ago we all read "Galapogos" by William Beebee. In "Arcturus Expedition" he tells the complete story of that famous company of naturalists and adventurers who were equipped by the New York Zoological Society. Crisis, suspense, mystery, thrills galore!

We may "see ourselves as others see us" in "The Duffers' Handbook of Golf" written by Grautland Rice and illustrated by Clara Briggs.

Do you keep in touch with the greatest moving-picture of all, the panorama of the stars and constellations? If so, you will love this new book "The Music of the Spheres" by Florence Armstrong Grondal. It is not all music and poetry, it is accredited science, too. Next best to having a ten year old child of one's own to whom we may give this book, is to give it to any child anywhere!—or to keep it for one's own library.

Adam was the first gardener, and ever since the gates of Eden were closed on him, his descendants have hankered to get back into a garden. Elsa Rehmann explains in her fascinating book "Garden-Making" how a beautiful garden is possible even where space is limited to a single path. In charming style she discusses grouping, fragrance, color, design.

Of course, in Toledo, from this very date we are all going to be immensely interested in gardens, since we have this very summer of 1926 established a local branch of the National Flower and Fruit Guild. We do not need to own a garden to have a part in this unique organization. Membership in the Guild is open to every-one, our dues will help to pay the expenses of operating a center. No more flowers need wilt on the stem, or waste their fragrance. The Guild undertakes to distribute your excess of loveliness among the shut-ins, the hospitals, the unfortunates. So, of course, ten thousand of us are going to join. Some of us grow a little tired of trying to be strictly utilitarian, and we shall find satisfaction in this charming opportunity to spread beauty into forgotten nooks and corners.

When I opened "Pride of the Town" by Dorothy Walworth Carman, I shut it very quickly after reading six pages and I said to myself "I'm going to enjoy this book enormously, so I'll not read it now, but I'll go to Put-in-Bay one day and I'll read this story on the deck of whatever-boat-it-is-that-goes-there. Alas, I have never set sail!—and I'll tell you the reason why. I spent a day as a guest in a Toledo Beach cottage, the summer home of one of Toledo's solid citizens. Only four or five years ago one could sit on his front steps and dangle feet in Lake Erie. But to-day?—The blue lake has retreated from before that cottage, leaving the wharf, the cottage, the guests high and dry, to wonder what the wild waves are saying a quarter of a mile away! All the printed words and all the denunciatory speeches about the "water-steal" failed to affect me as did the sight of the lake shimmering in the distance, far, far away. That's why I relinquished my plan to go to Put-in-Bay and read this book on the deck of a boat. I am honestly afraid that our neighbors in a sister-state to the west may steal what remains of a once great lake on the very day I choose to go a-voyaging, and that I shall have to walk back. So with safety first as my motto, I read "Pride of the Town" in seclusion on my own front porch.

No, I am not going to tell you the story. There is a laugh on every page, thought-provoking paragraphs, clever epigrams, stinging satire. This book, like Beward Shaw's plays is good for the circulation of the blood. There is something of H .L. Mencken here, and of Sinclair Lewis' "Babbitt." The characters "come alive," you realize them, you live with them. I will quote just a few lines:

"Hypatia loved discovery and quest. She would have made an ideal wife for Christopher Columbus. "

"Mr. Ash had a wife, a stucco house, three children, and all the opinions he had formed before fourteen. His political conditions had been formed by the head-lines of news papers. He had a radio set with which he spent nearly every evening trying to get Cuba, and when he had got Cuba he switched to Miami."

"Topaz urged her married children to come back to reunions. She thought she loved them because she had given them food and clothing and never let them eat green apples. But she had never loved them enough to know what they were thinking about, or to care. After the age of five, her children were turned spiritually adrift."

"Everything in the brides' apartment was new, unbeautifully new. Nothing with a history. There is an art to mellowing furniture,—a blend of laughter, pipe smoke, meditation, and a few tears. Most young people begin life together with two books between elaborate book ends. Sometimes there are so few books that brides are embarrassed with too many book ends. But a modern bride would be frantic if she began life without myriad lamps and a thousand vases."

"Every one was too busy with the machinery of Christmas to think about Christmas."

"The Grand High Chief" of the "Reindeer" lodge was attending meetings in neighboring towns every night, leaving his wife to sit at home alone. He was always telling about the moral benefits of being a "Reindeer," and he spoke, too, about the "Reindeer" frolics, especially the annual clam bake where every man ate until the shells reached his knees."

"A mother should tend to her children's health, but the rest should be left to the public school. I am hoping the first year of school will take all the queerness out of Jane and Rebecca and make them just like everybody else."

"If you have a picture inside you, it has been conceived by the Holy Ghost and you must bear it. That child you should bear and it is as wicked to kill it as to kill a human child. Men and women commit that kind of infanticide every day, and it is a deadly sin."

I hope you are going to read "Pride of the Town." The theme is the deadly standardization of thought which is the curse of our schools, colleges, communities, and organizations. As the heroine once exclaimed, "God keep us all from being average!"

—oo—

The Best of the New Books

By Mrs. Robert C. Morris

ONE evening this summer, I saw the moving-picture "The Thief of Bagdad." In the entire performance there was for me just one big thrill when, abroad the magic carpet the winds of heaven stirring its fringed edges, the hero sailed away into Empyrean distances with his lady-love.

When I was ten goin' on eleven, a battered copy of Arabian Nights was my boon companion, and often, on the magic carpet, I was transported from a town in the hills of Pennsylvania across mysterious seas to strange and glamorous lands of the far east.

So I experienced on old familiar thrill when I discovered in a local book-store a collection of poems old and new under the title of The Magic Carpet, Poems for Travellers.

This compilation is the work of Mrs. Waldo Richards whose fine discrimination is attested by several other successful compilations.

The poems in this fascinating collection will have a wide appeal. They will interest those who have adventured among the scenes of the old world. They will especially intrique those whose wander-thirst has not been quenched, and who agree with Edna St. Vincent Millay.

"My heart is warm with friends I make,
And better friends I'll not be knowing,
Yet there isn't a train I would'nt take
No matter where it's going.

WE'RE all aboard the magic carpet and sail away on the first page with the familiar lines of Richard Hovey,

"There's a schooner in the offing
With her topsails shot with fire
And my heart has gone aboard her
For the Islands of Desire."

Byron, Whitman, Kipling describe for us the moods of the sea. Alfred Noyes shows us the White Cliffs of England.

A Little Thought

By Isabelle Elling

Dear, I wonder if we'll house-keep
In the other world!
If we will have a little house
With old Dutch blinds
That you will paint white each year
Like here.
If we will have a bit of earth
To make a springtime garden in;
And in the twilight
Of returning dreams
The old earth habit in me still—
I might go out upon that gardens edge
And kneel
To feel
The swell of radishes above the soil,
And pick green lettuce leaves
For meal.
And Christ, Who strolling down that way
(Remembering Nazareth and play)
So wistful, looking at my fare
May say:
"Child, I think I'll stay
For supper in your house today.

Browning, de la Mare, Burke, Robinson and others take us through ancient city gates, over Westminster bridge, into the dim recesses of the Abbey. We go with Marguerite Wilkinson to,

"The Cheshire Cheese where Johnson made merry,
The bloody Tower with its scenes of wrath,
And the old Cathedral of Canterbury."

We see the hawker selling daffodils on the curb near old Saint Paul's, and agree with Arthur Guiterman.

"They'll show you old St. Paul's
Crumbling bits of Roman walls,
Galleries of wondrous treasures,
Public parks for simple pleasures,
Palaces remotedly dated,
Vaulted chambers consecrated
By Elizabeth the Spinster,
And the Abbey of Westminster,
And the House of Common's lobby,—
But the finest thing in London is the Bobby!"

WE see the spires of Oxford, the lakes of Ireland, heather of Scotland, mountains of Wales.

We live in Paris with Alan Seeger. With him and with other poets we loiter at the book-stalls on the Seine; we stroll under flowering chestnuts; from balconies set high in the walls of old stone palaces we discover familiar towers and domes.

With the poets we go through the long corridors of the Louvre. Bliss Carman points out the statue,

"Whose fluttering wind-blown garments keep
The very freshness, fold and sweep
They wore upon the galley's prow.
By what unwonted favor now
Hast thou alighted in this place,
Thou victory of Samothrace?"

ON the magic carpet of poetry we flit over the lights and shadows of the forest of Fountainbleau, we wander down the Rhine, we see the sun-rise from mountain peaks of Switzerland, the cherry blossoms at Grenada, the flower-market of Copenhagen.

In some of Amy Lowell's loveliest lines she shows us the "cloud of rose and violet poised upon a changing sea" that is Venice; she paints word-pictures of Rome and Naples.

Greece, Egypt, the desert,—we explore ancient civilizations swept on the tide of modern poetry.

The last group presents poems for the traveler who is homeward bound. When we read the very last line, we want, more than anything else, to begin at the beginning and read all these poems again.

Was it Emily Dickenson who wrote,—

"There is no frigate like a book
To take us lands away,
Nor any coursers like a page
Of prancing poetry."

There are many excellent new books written in prose which may inform or inspire the traveler, but to travel with this little book in one's bag is like having among one's equipment an Aladdin's lamp. It has power to summon Magic, Rhythm, Color, Charm, and make them our daily companions.

* * *

ONE of the very best of the season's novels, "Teeftallow" by T. S. Stribling, is a stirring convincing picture of life among the hill people of our southern states. The novel of the south used to be a clever blend of music, moonlight, chivalry and a dash of intrigue. The publication of "Barren Ground" by Ellen Glasgow marked a change. We are told that the purpose of fiction is to broaden, to deepen and to clarify our knowledge of human life. "Teeftallow" adds much to our knowledge of human life south of Mason and Dixon's line, and dispells the romantic fog which hid devastating truths concerning some of our fellow citizens. This novel doth a tale unfold that will cause your every separate hair to stand on end like quills upon the fretful porcupine. It will explain in a measure the Scopes' trial of last summer. You will live in a small town in Tennessee, go to church with the fundamentalist, gossip over the back fences, hunt human prey and lynch him, march with the white caps.

"Teeftallow" is a man's book, but I hope that women will read it. It was chosen as the Book-of-the-Month for June.

* * *

"O GENTEEL Lady" by Esther Forbes was chosen as the Book-of-the-Month for July. I hope the compositor will get that title correctly. It is not about a gentile lady or a gentle lady, but a genteel lady, which was the objective our great-grandmothers used to describe a female creature of refinement and culture. Esther Forbes is a very young writer to have given us this realistic picture of social life in Boston of the 1850's. It is said that she reconstructed the social background of the middle century by exploring among the treasures of an attic in Massachusetts as Anne Parrish dug among the antiquities stored in an attic in Delaware before she wrote "The Perennial Bachelor." (Rummage sales are so fashionable in Ohio that we may be depriving future novelists of valuable material.) Browning, Longfellow, Holmes and Tennyson all come alive on the pages of this enthralling story,—and it is no wonder, because Esther Forbes is a grand-niece of Ralph Waldo Emerson himself! The genteel lady wore billowing hoopskirts, but in her veins ran the same red blood as that which runs in the veins of the girls of 1926. Read the story and you

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The Best of the New Books

(continued from page 23)

will discover that human nature was very much the same in 1850 as it is today. Grandfather and grandmother were not lifeless sticks, they were flesh and blood youngsters in their day, curious about the world about life and love. If you are among those who profess to be perplexed by the actions and attitudes of present day young people, read "O Genteel Lady." you need it!

The Best of the New Books

By Mrs. Robert C. Morris

SO many worth-while books have come to my desk, that this month I am suffering from an embarrassment of riches. Here are three or four clamoring to be mentioned, when I had planned to write a page or so about just one book.

I like immensely this new novel "Rough Justice" by the Englishman, C. E. Montague, who has not written a book for several years, but whose editorials in the Manchester Guardian explain in part the wide popularity of that newspaper on this side of the pond.

For half the length of the book the narrative runs slowly, sluggishly; then it gathers momentum, the current grows strong, swift and relentless, moving toward a goal which was inevitable from the beginning. The peaceful, leisurely flow of the first half of the story suggests conditions in England preceding August, 1914.

Two children, Molly and Bron, lived in an old house by the Thames, Bron's father was Molly's guardian. The house is described as "a Tudor mansion of mottled, red brick, built about 1550. It looked up and down along two of the highest tidal reaches of the Thames. The river front of the house ran into the garden, the garden melted into wide England beyond. Flower seeds from the garden had blown out for centuries on to the outer turf that the tide watered twice daily. House and garden, garden and foreshore, the old and august thoroughfare of the Thames and the green stretch of Surrey beyond it were all members one of another."

IF you have spent a summer day in a little boat, part of the colorful pageant of river-craft on the historic stream,—you have seen that house, or one exactly like it.

After the death of his wife, Thomas Garth fathered and mothered both children.

In years of reading I have seldom found a character so clearly drawn, so convincing, so alive, so sound and so lovable as Thomas Gath. One of his notions was that "the national ship was carrying too many passengers, too little crew." A moving force in his life was the idea that "all the virtues worth having are various forms of courage and all the vices are various modes of turning tail and showing white feathers."

If you have ever loved a running stream, the exquisite portrayal of the moods of the river will touch your sensibilities, and you will enjoy the first half of the book if only for that response.

SCHOOL and college days were over for Bron and Molly and their playmate Victor Nevin at the outbreak of the World War. The two well-born young Englishmen enlisted as privates but with motives as widely differing as their characters. In no war story that we have read are there more vivid revelations of the sordid side of camp-life, stripped of all but bed-rock essentials of drill and discipline.

While moving with his regiment toward the front, Victor is stunned by shell explosion and regains consciousness among the abandoned dead. At night-fall he found himself knocking at the door of an isolated farm cottage. The woman who opened the door was young, strong, "a woman of large make, a figure of ripe force and fertility such as sculptors model to symbolize Asia or Earth. Her shape was the wonder. Over its splendour of contour her peasant dress ran loose or tight here and there as if to jibe at the vulgar and important feminine forms that cheap wholesale clothing has to be made for."

Victor slept and rested when he should have hastened to rejoin his regiment. He was listed as "missing, believed killed,"—and that was the word finally sent by the war-office to England, and to Molly, his sweetheart.

It's not fair to the author to finish the story here. It is, in my judgment, one of the very best of the flood of war stories and well worth reading for the notably artistic handling of background, incident and characters. *(Cont. on page 39)*

SEA STORM

By Isabelle Elling

All night long the pale wet lichens
Dug their fingers
In the grey-faced stoic cliffs.
The falling rain
With beating breath
Rushed to the white-lipped heaving sea.
. . . . And all night long the Lear-like wind
Sobbing . . . . and blind,
In throes of salt-sea mist
Staggered with groping hands . . . .
Feeling for sails that clasped him in the dawn.

The Best of the New Books

(continued from page 22)

NO matter into what depths of weariness the tired business man has fallen "The Saga of Billy the Kid" by Walter Noble Burns will awaken him and keep him awake until the last page. This is not fiction, it is a chapter in American history written by a man who has made a special study of that period when our southwestern states were the frontiers of our civilization. If you are always looking for a "moral lesson" in a book you will in your ignorance dub as "dangerous," this life story of a lad who died at twenty-one having killed twenty-one men, "not counting Indians."

No imaginary detective yarn can hold a candle to this for thrills, crises and suspense. Perhaps father would better hide it under the mattress and keep it out of little Johnnie's sight,—though I think it will hurt neither of them.

POPULAR legend has transformed Billy the Kid into the Robin Hood of New Mexico. "Innumerable stories of him are told at every camp fire on the range; they enliven the winter evenings in every Mexican home. The troubadour touch is upon them all,—oral legends kept alive in memory and passed on by the story tellers of one generation to the story-tellers of the next in Homeric succession. They are folklore in the making."

An interesting incident in the lurid career of the kid is an interview with General Lew Wallace who had been sent by President Hayes as Governor of New Mexico with orders to end the feud in Lincoln county. Wallace decided to use his powers of persuasion to induce the kid to settle down to useful citizenship. "It was a meeting, not so much of two men, as of two worlds. They clasped hands across a gulf of ages. One was a product of culture and refinement; the other of a rough frontier; one finished, the other primitive; one constructive the other obstructive. The governor was an intellect; the kid a trigger finger."

Mrs. Wallace closed the shutters of the governor's palace in Santa Fe, because the bright light of a student lamp made a shining mark of the governor's head as he sat late at night writing chapters of "Ben Hur."

Truth is stranger than fiction, and in all purely imaginative narrative there are few scenes that will compare with the stark and gripping realism of the kid's escape from jail, and that last scene of all, which ends his strange, eventful history.

The Best of the New Books

By Mrs. Robert C. Morris

THE other day I discovered a new book that is really amusing. We are always swimming neck-deep in a flood of books presenting problems—political, economic, sex or social. A book with a true vein of humor is like a sun-warmed rock amid the swirl.

This book, "Mendel Marantz" by David Freedman will amuse and delight you for several evenings, and after you have read the last chapter some of the practical common-sense of the chief character will have won your respect.

The hero of this tale of New York's East Side is a lazy, talkative, good humored fellow, whose wife was not lazy or talkative or good-humored. Mendel loved to talk to his wife while she labored over a wash-board. He admonished Mrs. Marantz to cheer up, and attempted to assist her in the process by the expression of clever generalizations in which he clothed a certain homely philosophy of life. Here are a few of his pronouncements:

"Lying pays in the long run, but no one can run fast enough."

What is fame? A ladder. The higher you climb the more it shakes.

Old age? A woman denies it. A man defies it. What is a person? Cut-glass. From every angle you see different colors.

A wife? The supreme court. It is always right. Partners? They are like pickles, — start sweet and turn sour.

Opportunity? It is an actor, always in disguise. Love? A sky-scraper, the deeper the foundation the higher it reaches.

Tell the truth, but don't overdo it.

An idea is an egg. What kind of idea it is depends not on who lays it, but who sits on it."

EARLY in the story Mrs. Marantz delivers an ultimatum,—if Mendel won't stop philosophizing and go to work, she will "get her a job by the dress-maker," and Mendel may stay home and take care of the apartment in the tenement-house, wash the children, the clothes and the dishes, go to market and cook the meals.

Confronted by stern necessity which is always the mother of invention, Mendel invents a combination house-cleaner, a wierd machine which ran on wheels and performed all the domestic chores with super human intelligence.

A group of financiers buy the invention for a fabulous sum, and the lovable, lazy philosopher is transformed over night into a millionaire! But does Mendel enjoy this lightning change? He finds difficulty in adjusting himself to new demands. His wife insisted that they travel, and Mendel retorted, "What for do I need a whole continent? And so many homes? By the time I come to one home, right away I got to pack up to travel to the next one! Today we're here, and tomorrow we're in California or Florida. For this I got rich, to spend my life on the trains like a conductor? I have to dress like a waiter, carry a stick like a cripple, and I must have bridges or plates in my mouth!"

Mendell rebelled, bought a gorgeous mansion for his wife and children, and for his own home he built a new tenement house on the site of the old one, where once, when he had been poor and happy, he had rocked and talked while his wife bent over the steaming wash-tub.

There were in New York scores of newly-rich men like himself, unable to adjust themselves to the demands of a strange environment. These men, like Mendel, were lonely for the old neighbors, the old smells and the old-time cooking and freedom of Pitt street.

Mendel rented flats in his tenements to these fellow sufferers, each one rated A-1 in Dun's and Bradstreets' and there they wore disreputable old clothes, shoes like foot-balls and pinned flannel shirts with safety pins.

Mendel's wife returned to Pitt street, tired of being an idle rich woman. "Cooking? the cook won't let me. Cleaning? the porter won't let me? Buying? the butler won't let me."

SILVER WIND

By Isabelle Elling

Silver wind has been all day
Playing in my silver bay.
He teased the sails of little ships
And blew them far away.
He lured them to the open sea
And could not blow them back to me.
The sun went down, the sea rose high
And though I cried and cried
They drifted in the swishing foam
And vanished side by side.

Don't ever, ever trust your ships
With Silver Wind I say.
Though he be fair, and sweet the day,
He'll never bring them back again
To sail-dream in your silver bay.

Husband and wife have some amusing adventures as match-makers, before suitable life-partners are found for their children.

I think you will enjoy reading this story, so I'll not attempt to finish it for you.

As a last bit of Mendel Marantz's philosophy I will add, When you're eating apples don't talk and when you feel like talking, eat apples."

EVERYBODY is reading Edna Ferber's new book, "Show Boat." Whether, as a novel, it is so big as "So Big" is a debatable question.

I cannot credit the rumor that Miss Ferber was never a passenger on a Show Boat, although it is a matter of literary history that Washington Irving wrote Rip Van Winkle in London, and had never seen the Catskill mountains.

"Show Boat" is an enthralling story of life on "ole Mississippi" in the '70's. "The day of the flowing moustache, the broad-brimmed hat, the open-faced collar, and the diamond stud."

Few readers of this novel know that show boats are still doing business on the Ohio and Mississippi. One of them is just completing its 53d season.

Once they produced the old melodrama "Nellie, the Beautiful Cloak-Model" but now they give performances of "Peg O' My Heart" and "Trail of the Lonesome Pine."

There is a medicine show-boat now operating on the Ohio, "The Temple of Health."

Edna Ferber's new novel displays her exceptional skill in the creation of atmosphere. While you read the story you are on the deck of the "Cotton Blossom Floating Palace," watching the panorama of the river as it lazily drifts astern. Captain Andy Hawks and his wife Parthenia are likely to take their place among the characters in American fiction that have "come alive" through a writer's magic, and will stay alive for another generation at least.

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The Best of the New Books

By Mrs. Robert C. Morris

MOST of us associate the early history of this country with the familiar date 1776 and the famous Declaration. It is well to remember that there were pioneers in the forests of Virginia way back in the early sixteen hundreds. Once in a while we find a readable book which "carries us back to ole Virginny," and gives us a glimpse of the romantic figure of Raleigh whose name still heads the list of colonizers.

Robert Chambers' new novel "The Man They Hanged" is a story of Dutch New York City and of gallant Captain Kidd. Of course, Chambers is not a top-notcher in literary circles, but in this tale he spins a vastly entertaining yarn. Through the chapters pass a colorful procession of pirates, beautiful ladies, ruthless soldiers, roving adventures, and powerful colorful rulers who whispered and conspired in the dark of a seventeenth century moon.

But, alas! the narrative strips from the figure of Captain Kidd the trappings of illusion which he wore in our childhood fancy. It seems that Kidd was not a gory pirate who compelled peaceful citizens to walk the plank for his amusement. Oh, no indeed! he was gentle, law-abiding, persecuted, misunderstood, and his death was a gross miscarriage of justice. The real pirates, if you please, were the forbears of the leaders of the present New York four hundred. The blood of the old-time bucanneers runs in their veins, and that fact accounts for some of the high-handed performances in Wall street. If this be historic truth, it is just as well that we reconstruct our conceptions of Captain Kidd, but we do it reluctantly. These searchers for truth have robbed us of William Tell and of the efficacy of red flannel, and the first thing we know they will be telling us that Long John and his pals of Treasure Island were merely missionaries.

Edward S. Van Zile was inspired by Chambers' story to write:

"Yes, the tale is entertaining,
And in reading it you're gaining
A knowledge of historic truth that's hitherto been hid;
And so, Chambers, we must thank you
For restoring worthy rank to
That much abused adventurer, the gallant Captain Kidd."

THE ladies, are all talking about Dorothy Canfield's latest novel, "Her Son's Wife." It is a story of a widowed school-teacher whose aggressive, dominating personality had prevented the normal development of her son's initiative and individuality. He was mamma's good little boy, or she thought he was, until he brought his wife home to live with his mother. The girl and the woman are antithetical,—the former is not well-born, or well-bred or well educated. Her place in the human scale is so low that we rather suspect the novelist of having introduced into polite literature the type the psychiatrists identify as moron."

Lottie's one idea was to have a good time and a few thrills every day, and when she left the house and went in pursuit of happiness she left the dishes unwashed, the floor unscrubbed, the baby uncared for. She sang the baby to sleep with a lullaby the words of which shocked the grandmother:

"I should worry, I should care,
I should marry a millionaire,
He should die, and I should cry,
And I should marry another guy."

Lottie always bought shoes that were several sizes too small. She developed a permanent pain in her extremities, but attributed her sufferings to some mysterious, deep-seated physical disorder. The old family doctor recommended comfortable foot-gear. Lottie consulted a medical quack who had just hung up his sign, and he advised Lottie to go to bed for several weeks, diagnosing her ailment in strange fine-syllabled words of Latin derivation. It is at this point in the story that temptation assails the widow Bascomb. If she can but keep Lottie in bed in-

November Woods

By Isabelle Elling

Upon the earth there is the touch of death
And listless leaves drift down
The lonely ways to die.
With frantic breath the wild wind
Blows their stark bodies round and round—
As an anguished mother
Blows the fingers of her dying child.

. . . . . Though winds may blow until the end of time—
The great sun burn to its last ray of light
Not one dead leaf shall ever find its tree
Nor drink sweet sap
Nor dream in shining green again.

definitely, she can care for the neglected grand-child and restore the house to order and cleanliness! So the mother-in-law fed Lottie's fear that paralysis would ensue upon any attempt to walk again, and the story closes seventeen years later with Lottie still in bed, fair, fat and approaching forty. But Lottie's daughter has been saved, her husband is succeeding in business, and her mother-in-law's house is neat as wax. But, did the end justify the means? Have we a right to meddle even with the life and liberty of morons?

JULIA Marlowe, Her Life and Art" is a biography of well-loved actress beautifully written by Charles Edward Russell.

Often Miss Marlowe's lovely voice has carried that familiar and exquisite rising inflection in Juliet's question, "What's in a name?" She herself has answered to several names. She was born Sarah Frances Frost in Cumberland, in the north of England.

A practical joker unknowingly played Fate to the Frost family. This young man pretended that Sarah's father had deprived him of an eye by a playful flick of a whip-lash. Fearing arrest and imprisonment, the elder Frost escaped to America, sending for his family later. They were all settled in Kansas before they learned that the joker's eye was uninjured. Little Sarah remembered crossing the stormy Atlantic in the steerage in 1870, when she was five years old.

For safety's sake her father had assumed the name of Brough, and his daughter was known to her school-mates as Fanny Brough. Later they lived in Portsmouth, Ohio, and when the head of it deserted his family the mother, who was of a dauntless breed of Cumberland women, moved to Cincinnati and kept an hotel. Fanny Brough's stage career began there when, in 1876, she played the part of a sailor in the chorus of Pinafore, and was paid seven dollars a week.

It was years later that she adopted her stage name—Julia from a character in "The Hunchback" and Marlowe from the great Elizabethan dramatist, Christopher Marlowe.

No other actress has played a greater number of times in Shakespearean roles or drawn audiences so large and so enthusiastic.

There is a tradition that for the manager, "Shakespeare spells ruin," but Julia Marlowe turned the old plays into financial success. Her life makes excellent reading, and will revive for her admirers the various parts she interpreted with such glorious artistry, for "the trick of that voice I do well remember."

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Work's Auction Bridge Comment

(continued from page 26)

Trick 4, South leads the King of Diamonds; West plays the Four of Spades; North, the Five of Diamonds; and East plays the Eight of Diamonds.

West's play of the Four of Spades is made with the idea of being in position to ask for a Spade lead by the play of the Deuce, if the partner should obtain the lead, but apparently to show weakness in Spades by discarding them without making a signal, holding up the Deuce as long as the adversaries continue in the lead.

Trick 5, South leads the Queen of Diamonds; West plays the Six of Spades; North, the Seven of Diamonds; and East, the Nine of Diamonds.

Trick 6, South leads the Ace of Hearts; West plays the Four; North, the Trey; and East, the Deuce.

Trick 7, South leads the King of Hearts; West plays the Eight; North, the Six; and East, the Five.

Trick 8, South leads the Jack of Hearts; West plays the Seven of Spades; North, the Queen of Hearts; and East, the Nine of Hearts. *(Continued on page 35)*