

# BOOKS and AUTHORS and REVIEWS and COMMENT

## CURRENT AMERICAN AND FOREIGN FICTION

A Meritorious American "Minor Novel"—Stories of Mid-Victorian England and Late Nineteenth Century Newport—A Chinese Mystery.

### THE WAYS OF LIFE.

THE WOMEN WE MARRY. By Arthur Stanwood Pier. 12mo, pp. 375. Boston: The Houghton Mifflin Company.

The "blurb" on the slip-cover of this novel is made up of a series of sensational questions: "Does patience in a husband ever cease to be a virtue?" "Do irresponsible, nomadic bachelors ever make good husbands?" "Does the over-in-law problem distress you?" "If you make a mistake in marrying, is it ever wise to admit it?" It is true that in these questions present themselves in this story, not as "problems," but as part of its warp and woof, but it is truer still that the quality of the novel, its real meaning, is far superior to sentimentalism of this kind, justifiable though it may be as a means of drawing attention to a book that deserves it, both as a piece of sound, good writing and as a study of life in the cultured average in this country. Discussion has arisen again lately of the great superiority of English over American current fiction, not only in the matter of workmanship but also in that of the choice of subject and the understanding and interpretation of its meaning. "The Women We Marry" is not a great novel, but much less is it a sensational, superficial article made to sell. It is an excellent specimen of the "minor novel," giving that classification all the significance it has earned; and as such it is worthy of comparison with the English products of its class held up for our edification.

Mr. Pier tells a convincing story of the way of life with men and women, especially of its disillusion and the compensations these bring with them. It is a study of the transition from youth to maturity of two men and two women, of the later storm and stress that set the final stamp upon character by giving it understanding, and, in a measure, wisdom, through experience. The characters are firmly handled, with notable insight into the complex mental and emotional processes of women at this juncture; the well-balanced plot, in which the active agent of one part becomes the passive factor in the other, is one of catastrophes narrowly escaped, again by repeated incidents, but this coincidence is not stretched beyond probability, and the telling way in which it is used fully justifies it. Without the story is of our day and our life, thoroughly modern in its quiet treatment of love and marriage; and yet, but not least, what a delight it is to meet a group of people who, after the author has informed his reader that they are well-born and well-bred, prove his assertion in their every action, thought and speech. Mr. Pier is coming into his own.

### A SABINE WOMAN.

NORTH OF FIFTY-THREE. By Bertrand W. Sinclair. Illustrated by John Otto Fischer. 12mo, pp. 35. Boston: Little, Brown & Co.

Mr. Sinclair starts delightfully, with as romantic a case of abduction as can be imagined in these modern days. To be sure, the kidnapping takes place in British Columbia, on the edge of the wilderness, but the locality gives additional zest to the story, and, indeed, furnishes its theme, which is the ad-

vantages of health, happiness and freedom in earning a livelihood which the wild offers. The girl has had her bitter experience of civilization in a small Canadian town on the Atlantic border. Malice and the gossip it causes have driven her away to the other end of the continent, only to pursue her thither. Her abductor is a chivalrous American, who, too, has known the struggle for existence of the cities. The adventure is handled throughout in a wholesome manner, and developed in an original manner. The healthful, peaceful, laborious life of the woods is repeatedly contrasted, in the development, with the artificialities, the worries, insincerities and dishonesties of the civilization to which both the man and the woman return before they make their final choice.

### MID-VICTORIAN.

MONKSBRIDGE. By John Ayasough. 12mo, pp. 345. Longmans, Green & Co.

Mr. Ayasough's books are like green oases amid the rush and the rattle, the problems and purposes of modern fiction. In them one spends quietly amused and interested hours among people not of our generation, but whose ways and views have not yet become unfamiliar to us. In "Monksbridge" he deals with simple English folk; in "Monksbridge" he takes us among "the quality." Gentlefolk they are, and if their ways of life and thought seem simple to us, their problems far from simple, the author makes them none the less real for that. There are delightful bits of the English literary tradition scattered over his pages—of dovecotes and halls, bishops' palaces and wardenships; in "Monksbridge" there is more than a trace of Trollopean plot and Trollopean satire. And there is the chief occupation of mid-Victorian maidenhood and motherhood, the giving and the taking in marriage. It is the taking with which we are most concerned here, for Miss Sylvia Auberon is a modern girl of her own day and generation. Competent she is to manage her own affairs, and those of the peer whom she decides to marry, her mother's (who never revolts), her sister's, and her brother's, who yet causes a tempest by turning Catholic, for we are in the agitated days of the Church of England in the sixties of the last century. A well-bred book, softly aglow with the tempered colors, the placid atmosphere of its period, a bit of English social history in fiction.

### OUR BEST SOCIETY.

THE COMPLETE AND SOMEWHAT MAD HISTORY OF THE FAMILY OF MONTAGUE VINCENT. By Julian Huxley. 12mo, pp. 35. Duffield & Co.

This story is so very long, and there is so much entertaining reading in it, that it is difficult to characterize it in a few words. The sub-title, still more the author's dedication of the book to himself, "without whose persistent and flattering assurances these pages would never have been accomplished," suggests social satire, which is not lacking, as a matter of fact; but the book is mostly social comedy, with a tragic interlude or two. "E"—the initial stands for Edith—is its heroine; a young man of vast riches is its hero, but Montague Vincent, Esq., is its most picturesque figure. He is a social adventurer of a type that belongs to the period at which the story begins, that of the early eighties, when it was an easier matter than it is now to establish one's self socially with the aid of nothing more tangible than cleverness and assurance. The new era of sudden riches that opened with the close of the Civil War, the accompanying violent upheaval of old social conditions and traditions, the influx of new people, favored the socially ambitious, the founders of brand new best families. Montague Vincent, Esq., whose antecedents remain unknown until the end, is one of these founders, even though, lacking capital and uncertain of his income, as the stock market rises or falls, his house is built on sand.

He marries the simple daughter of a rural colonial New England family, converts her unproductive broad acres into sties for a summer colony, and with the proceeds makes assault on Newport's exclusiveness. Its doors open readily, because he is more exclusive than the haughtiest of them. Henceforth the book is a history of a crude social period now almost—and by many willingly—forgotten. Here are the newcomers and the fortune hunting British noblemen with their supercilious ways of that day. Here are the free young women of great wealth and no breeding they married. It is a good picture, drawn by an observant contemporary, but it also is a good story of individuals rather than of types. The author is a little too dilatory in reaching the end, which is the beginning of "E's" happiness; he has



Drawing by Will Grete from "The Green Seal," A.C. McClurg & Co.

overburdened his closing pages with plot, but Montague Vincent, Esq., of Newport, is an adventurer of parts.

### A RATTLING GOOD YARN.

THE GREEN SEAL. By Charles Edmonds Walk. Illustrations by Will Grete. 12mo, pp. 494. Chicago: A.C. McClurg & Co.

This is a good piece of work, something far better than the average contemporary mechanical story of crime and its detection. San Francisco, its Chinese colony, a jade ring with an ancient symbol carved upon it; that same symbol stood on the chest of a young woman; a diamond of marvelous value, an oldtime Western highwayman, a lawyer, a detective who confesses that he "ain't no Sherlock Holmes," but who knows his business from first to last—all these and many more people and things are mixed up by the author in a plot whose ingenuity and complexity have the crowning merit of plausibility as well as of unflagging interest. The story is firmly constructed, it develops naturally once one has become familiar with the unenviable properties of the jade ring—and one of the East strange things may come in mystery stories as well as in human beliefs. The Americans in these pages—the police included—grope blindly for a solution that must be sought among the Celestials in the city, who, of course, are bland and inscrutable. In the end the Chinese obtain what they are after by swift, silent means of their own; and here and heroine are left wondering, but happy.

### A RETURN TO THE PRIMITIVE.

EVERETTAPPLE COVE. By George Van Schadel. Frontispiece by George Van Schadel. 12mo, pp. 286. Boston: Small, Maynard & Co.

What makes this simple tale of a Newfoundland fishing village worth while is the genuine, humanly appealing quality of its love affair. There is no sophistication here, no self-questioning, no doubt; these two brought together from the centre of civilization on its barren selvage, amid poverty and suffering, recognize each other and obey the impulse of the recognition. The setting is that made familiar to us by Dr. Grenfell, but the book is not one of unrelieved somberness for all that. Several of the natives are capably sketched in their philosophy of life relieved by a friendly recognition of their unconscious humor as well as of the bravery of their struggle for mere existence; and the story of one of them, a French fisherman, gives the author still another opportunity for the exercise of that telling way of his of appealing to our sympathies. The English clergyman, self-exiled for the sake of service, and his brave, helpful wife are another couple worth mentioning; in short, from first to last the book sounds true.

### IMPERIAL ROME.

UNTO CAESAR. By Baroness Orczy. 12mo, pp. 382. The George H. Doran Company.

The Rome of early Christianity has come to be considered as a field so thoroughly gleaned as to have become unprofitable for the further purposes of historical fiction. It has yielded a succession of immensely popular romances from Bulwer-Lytton to Steniewicz, since whose "Quo Vadis" it has been practically neglected by our novelists. That the gleanings have been thorough, that the remaining opportunities for original treatment of the subject are exceedingly few, is undeniable, but Baroness Orczy has, in face of all this, produced a story that is remarkably good of its kind, and notable for the originality of its conception of the early Christian's attitude toward the state and its head. Her hero, like those of most if not all of her predecessors in the field, is a Roman patrician, an officer of Caligula; but, instead of turning to the lowly communism of the mass of the early followers of the new religion, he interprets the "render unto Caesar" according to the lights of his caste. He who might, through conspiracy and treachery, become Emperor of Rome finds in the teaching of his Master an

unquestionable command of loyalty to the despotic tyrant. It is only after his duty as he sees it has been done that he lays down his honors and returns, a humble seeker, to Palestine, where, seven years before, he had served under Pontius Pilate and stood with his legionaries on Golgotha. Nor is his love won by a Christian slave; it is a daughter of the Caesars who, blind

## CURRENT TALK OF BOOKS AND AUTHORS

Norman Angel's New Work—Provincetown as a "Literary Centre"—Frank Norris's Note Book—A Roman Joy Rider—The Browning Letters.

"Arms and Industry," the new book of Norman Angel, author of "The Great Illusion," is published to-day by G. P. Putnam's Sons. A "study of the foundations of international policy," the work examines the nature of the forces that are transforming the relationship of states, and, indeed, to some extent, the mechanism of organized society as a whole. A large proportion of the book is devoted to an exposition of the interaction of material and moral forces in politics, the relation of nationality and political idealism to those theories with which the author's name is so strongly identified.

### More Books of the Week.

Henry Holt & Co. publish to-day "Myths of the Hindus and Buddhists," by "Sister Niv-Jita," and William Boyd's "From Locke to Montessori," in which, with full tribute to Dr. Montessori's great work, the author traces her fundamental ideas as he finds them in the work of some earlier educators.

### A New "Literary Centre."

A decade or more ago Mr. Howells devoted several papers in one of our periodicals to a discussion of our "literary centres," which led to the one important discovery that the palm had passed from Boston to New York as the great centre of the country. On the theory, then propounded, that the fact that more than two authors reside in the same community suffices to make it a "literary centre," Provincetown, Mass., may now claim admission to the already forgotten circle. No less than three novels published this spring were all being written there at the very same time—"Storm," by Wilbur Steele; "Our Mr. Wrenn," by Sinclair Lewis; and "The Heart's Country," by Mary Heaton Vorse. At the same time, so it is said, Susan Glaspell was also writing in Provincetown, and previously Louis Joseph Vance had worked there on "Joan Thursday."

### Waste of Labor.

"The Job, the Man, the Boss," by Katherine M. H. Blackford and Arthur Newcomb, announced by Doubleday, Page & Co., is the latest outcome of the efficiency movement. Dr. Blackford is a leading member of the Efficiency Society and well known as a lecturer on business problems. She and Mr. Newcomb in this new book discuss the problem, so difficult in a big business, of the wastes involved in unskillful employment and dismissal of men. The authors suggest that every big business should have an employment department, to take sole charge of "hiring and firing." Dr. Blackford has made an exhaustive study of human analysis, and sees that most of the wasted energy in the world comes from the right man in the wrong position.

### Taxation.

C. B. Fillebrown, the author of the volume on "Taxation" in A. C. McClurg & Co.'s National Social Science Series, besides being a practical business man, served for several years as president of the Massachusetts Single Tax Association. He has not written a propagandist work, however, but considers all the present day forms of taxation, comparing those in force at home and abroad. His chapters on the theory of taxation in general cover ground usually left to more technical

to the light that shines for him, seeks and wins him. And, last but not least, the inevitable great scene in the arena proves to have been worth while doing once more. The book is by far the best this popular romantic novelist has written thus far. Its fortunes with the reading public will be worth watching.

### ELBA.

THE COMIC KINGDOM. By Rudolf Pickthal. With 16 illustrations. 12mo, pp. 197. The John Lane Company.

Beneath an extremely tenuous guise of fiction this book is a brief but sufficiently informing history of the ten months of Elba's dignity as a kingdom during the first exile of Napoleon in 1814. It is to be regretted that the author has chosen to write in what he himself considers a "comic" vein. His decidedly monotonous humor extends from the fiction to the history, whereas, in the retrospect, there was nothing preposterous in the game played by Napoleon to deceive his captors. His pretentious household and court, the palace he built, his court balls and opera house, his army of a few hundred men, his plans for the development of his miniature realm—all this may have amused the rulers and diplomats of Europe; it deceived them nonetheless, as it was intended to do. At times, moreover, Mr. Pickthal's sense of the comicality of it all changes into an early nineteenth century British vindictiveness toward the great conqueror that is as petty as it is belated. All these unfortunate shortcomings do not prevent the book from being worth reading, however. This brief period in the life of Napoleon has been overshadowed by what led to it, and by what followed, the tremendous drama of his final downfall. Historical works dealing with it are comparatively few and not easily accessible. Here is a concise statement of its happenings. But few monuments and relics of Napoleon's sojourn on Elba remain; we are informed, and some of these are of doubtful authenticity. Here and there comes upon a bit of information that is not widely known, the fact, for instance, that both Cambronne and General Drouot escaped execution for treason after Waterloo on the plea that they had been fighting in the service of a foreign sovereign—the King of Elba.

## LEADING FEATURES OF MAY MAGAZINES

Interpretations of Mr. Wilson's Mexican Policy—"Our Instinctive Idiocy"—America Overseas—A Study of Mrs. Samuel Pepys.

### [SECOND NOTICE.]

Professor Henry Jones Ford, President Wilson's successor as professor of politics at Princeton, opens the May "Atlantic Monthly" with a noteworthy paper on "Disorderly States," which, from a general historic survey, neatly narrows down to a consideration of the problem of the restoration of order in Mexico. Interference of the sort that leads to annexation, against which, on the part of Europe, the Monroe Doctrine was directed, is a remedy of the past on this continent, the author maintains; it now behooves us to guard against intervention by foreign capital invested in concessions. Thus he leads up to what he calls the Wilson Doctrine, promulgated last year, which aims at the checking of this foreign exploitation, and the substitution thereof of national reorganization. Taking as his point of departure Marie Antoinette's famous question, "Why don't they eat cake if they have no bread?" Seymour Deming writes humorously, but with a purpose, of "Our Instinctive Idiocy," the products of what he calls the "switchboard mind," and still more aptly, the "stand-pat mind." Leaving the author's radical purpose to the readers of his article, a few of his illustrations are worth quoting. Said the young enthusiast to the New York matron, "Wealth entails social responsibility." Said the matron, "I think that I entertain as much as any person in New York." A magistrate, upon asking what was the charge against the prisoner before him, received the answer: "Your honor, he was arrested for free speech." A man, affirmed the philanthropist, "ought to be worth twice what he is being paid." "No," declared the lady with the stand-pat mind, "I won't read Jane Adams's 'A New Conscience and an Ancient Evil.' What can she know about such things? She has never been married." And it was the opinion of a bank president that "what we need is a good, stiff panic. When they've starved a while they may be glad to stop striking and work for what they can get." There is an article on the methods employed by this country, England and Germany for the promotion of foreign commerce; Herbert Ravenel Sass brings "A Suit Against Science" for giving our youth the impression that life is one vast tragedy of the struggle for survival.

### "THE WORLD'S WORK."

While Professor Ford explains to us in the "Atlantic Monthly" that the policy of watchful waiting has inaugurated the Wilson Doctrine as the successor of that of Monroe, Dr. William Bayard Hale declares, in the new issue of "The World's Work," that this "New Monroe Doctrine," as he prefers to call it, establishes our sovereignty only as an effective source of moral inspiration over the nations of Central America and the West Indies—"Our Moral Empire in America." Both the professor and the doctor wrote, of course, before the development of the latest phase of this new doctrine on the Mexican coast. The "moral inspiration" has taken very material form, indeed. In the course of his article Dr. Hale says that "a very high percentage indeed once said to me, discussing the possibility of invading England with German troops, 'I know of a dozen ways of landing an army in England, but not of any certain way of getting it out again.' It was Moltke who said it to Dr. Habs— and to others. This is an 'America Overseas Number,' among the other contributors being the Secretaries of War and the Navy, Major General Wood and Captain James H. Oliver, U. S. N. In extent of the non-contiguous territory controlled, this country now holds seventh place among the nations of the earth, with 724,086 square miles. Not only England, France and Germany exceed us, but also Portugal, Holland and Italy. The articles are about evenly divided between the burdens we have assumed and the benefits we have bestowed in Porto Rico and the Philippines, not the least interesting paper being that of Secretary Garrison on the army's services in the peaceful work of sanitation and the organization of civil government in our possessions, in Cuba and in the Canal Zone. Captain Oliver discusses the naval problems created by America overseas in "Shall We Control the Pacific?"

### NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW.

For once the editor of the Review is in sympathy with Mr. Wilson. He opens its May number with an article in defence of his stand on the canal tolls question, and heads it "Why the President is Right," adding the words from Washington's farewell address, "Observe good faith and justice towards all nations." Medill McCormick undertakes to prove that Republicanism is a fusion for the national campaign of 1916 is utterly impossible; and, in more or less connection with this, David Jayne Hill takes "Soundings" of the present opposition to the Constitution as the "instrument of the property classes." Ida Husted Harper at the same time is certain that the enfranchisement of women will come through an amendment to the Constitution. This is her prediction:

The Senate Committee already has announced that it will again report in favor of its resolution for a national suffrage amendment, and this will undoubtedly be discussed and voted on again next session. There will then be more Senators with women constituents; more legislatures will have sent the question to the voters; more state conventions will have endorsed it; the parties will be lining up for the Presidential contest; those millions of women voters will loom very

large on the political horizon. Northern women more and more will rebel against having this measure of relief denied them because of the South's attitude of the negro women's vote. Southern women's eyes will be opened, and they, too, will demand this short cut to the ballot. The next vote in the Senate will show an increase, but it is not likely to reach the necessary two-thirds. Meanwhile, the House of Representatives will receive some rude shocks. Part of its members will come back much chastened in spirit; others will never come back; the women in their districts will know why. There will be a Woman Suffrage Committee in the lower house of the next Congress, and women will help it to understand its business.

If three out of the five campaign states should be carried next fall, women would be fully enfranchised in one-fourth of the states. Illinois is not included, although the women have the county, municipal and Presidential vote. The question will go to the electors in a number of states in 1915. One may hear conservative and yet see equal suffrage in one-third of the states within a few years. When that time comes the different parties represented in Congress will do a Marathon to see which shall have the credit of a national amendment.

Sydney Brooks writes of what Cuba has made of herself since this country showed her the way, and Gamaliel Bradford contributes a sketch of the unknown Mrs. Samuel Pepys.



## The Marryers

By Irving Bacheller

"It's a ticklesome kind of a book," says one man who has read the story. "A journey of about a thousand laughs will land one at the climax of the story a wiser and better American. Laugh by laugh he gathers wisdom in its pages." Like "Keeping Up with Lizzie," it provokes the laughter of conviction. You get something more than fun out of such books. You get your mental house jacked up and planked and leveled. "The Marryers" is Socrates Potter at his best. This time he gets after the Europe-mad and the title-crazy. He points the way to the only asylum for the sane in a time of general insanity—in a time when people are wasting their poverty and honor in wild commercial dissipations.

## What Will People Say?

By Rupert Hughes

The piper waits to be paid—paid by women usually—and while he waits, and they pay, a great story is dashing along in the pages of this new novel. It is a brilliant story of New York's mad dance after pleasure and wealth. Through hotels and cabarets, ballrooms, and country houses, by motor and on yachts, on the backs of blooded horses, racing, drinking, making love, heart-breaking, young girls, women who sell their soul, follow each other in feverish haste, with no break to hold them back except the fear of "what will people say?"

## The Gasoline Engine Book

By Alpheus Hyatt Verrill

This new addition to Harper's "Tell-Me-How" series will serve as a simple and practical guide for all those who own, use, or operate gas and gasoline motors. While intended for boys, it will prove of equal value to older readers, as it is more exhaustive than any book on the subject hitherto published—with the exception of strictly technical works. Clear and simple diagrams and illustrations enhance the value of the book.

## Social Forces in England and America

By H. G. Wells

"Here," says Wells himself, "is a fairly complete view of all of my opinions. It is practically all my miscellaneous writings for the last four or five years, edited and drawn together with an effective whole." He discusses divorce, motherhood, schoolmasters, and doctors; the political disease of our times; speculates upon the future of the American people; considers a possible setback to our civilization, which he finds menaced by panics and war, and ponders over the still undeveloped possibilities of science.

## Modern Dancing

By Mr. and Mrs. Vernon Castle

This book on the newest decent dances of to-day—brought out under the auspices of several New York social leaders—and written by the one recognized authority on dancing—makes it possible for every reader to know what the latest accepted dances are and to learn how to dance them. The new dances, such as the Castle Walk, the Hesitation Waltz, the Tango, are described step by step, and more than one hundred illustrations from photographs and moving pictures reveal the slightest change in the position of the feet. Above all, it is a practical book—practical as well as authoritative.

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