promises. The opening scene at Panama, where that stirling soldier Cristoval de Peralta is found enrolling volunteers for Pizarro's expedition, is full of color and animation. The fat Pedro, arriving at candlelight and descending from his mule with difficulty because of a wooden leg, commends himself immediately as a merry and witty fellow. "Is it you, Pedro?" cried a soldier. Answers Pedro: "It is I—that is my solid parts. Of the rest, those volatile are volatilized; those meltable, melted and bedewing the grass along my trail. Then—least but a parboiled residuum. Wilt hold my mule? Here, boy, guard my steed. But keep in front of him, for he hath a two-fold nature—tender hearted to a fault as far as the saddle girth; behind it, maleficent as the powers of evil." Fairly Shakespearian, and it will be discovered later that Pedro is going with the expedition as cook, and that he knows Latin.

In Peru Pedro kept his company well fed. He went foraging and procured a young llama, which afforded a most tender roast. He explained how he got it. "We met," said he, "a herder on the road, a few miles back, with a beautiful drove. We disarmed, my boy and I, and I paraded my wooden leg to the marvel of the Indio; took a pack of cards from my saddlebag and wrought divers tricks of magic—vanishing cards and the like—thou knowest; swallowed a horseshoe nail and took it out of mine ear; swallowed it again and took it out of his ear. He was spellbound with wonder—turned to stone, as if he had looked upon the aegis of Minerva—and at this juncture my boy threw his jacket over the head of one of the calves, or lambs, or colts, or pups, or whatever Heaven may be pleased to call the offspring of these heathen quadrupeds, and vanished into the bush. He might have removed the herd entire. I patted the Indio on the back, embraced him as a brother, found he had no pockets, and sent him on his way. When last we saw him his jaws were still agape."

The story tells all about the violences that the Spaniards did to the Peruvians. It describes the magnificence of the Incas and relates the love affair of Cristoval and the Princess Rava. The reader will thrill and have gooseflesh, we dare say, through the pages concerned with the great massacre and the nipping of the conspiracy and the Inca's last prayer and the thumbscrews and the barricades and the fugitives in the wilderness. If Pedro attracted us particularly it was because he relieved the matters of tragedy as well as because anyway he was well qualified to be entertaining. "Didst ever," inquired Pedro, "take a sitting hen from her nest and hold her under a pump, Cristoval, then release her?" "Name of a saint!" cried Cristoval. "Of course I never did, thou unaccountable cook. Why should I?" "Only," said Pedro, "to observe her state of mind—her indignation." He was aiming at an illustration. It will hardly be doubted that he had a picturesque mind. We feel that we may be excused for dwelling upon him particularly.

A New "Patty" Book.

Carolyn Wells's "Patty" has been spending a winter in Paris seeing the famous sights, buying souvenirs in the fascinating shops and meeting with the pleasant adventures that a kindly disposed author always provides for a young girl heroine to enjoy and the other young girls to read about with envy. The record of it all, published in a new book called "Patty in Paris" (Dodd, Mead & Co.), is wholesome and entertaining and presents an unspoiled and attractive young American girl under very delightful conditions. One of the most distinctive features in this latest "Patty" book is the introduction of the new type of stepmother who is no longer the terrible ogre of the old time juvenile fiction, from fairy tales to Sunday school books, but a young and fascinating woman heartily in sympathy with her seventeen-year-old stepdaughter. She even joins with Patty in persuading "papa" to do things Patty's way and to give her the year in Paris instead of the year at a finishing school, which Patty says she is sure would "finish" her.

The Career and End of Wheeler.

Eli Wheeler was certainly a great rascal, in William W. Canfield's story of "The Spotter; a Romance of the Oil Region" (R. F. Fenno & Co.). He is described as a catlike, soft spoken man, about 45, narrow chested, with shoulders that sloped as sharply as the roof of a Queen Anne cottage. He was catlike, but we were surprised that he should have taken in Cameron, who should have had a hard head, since he was a Scotchman. When Wheeler ran away to Europe with his stolen wealth it pleased us to learn that the defrauded and impoverished Cameron was on his trail. We were thoroughly glad when Cameron overtook Wheeler in Paris, and recognizing him through his careful disguise said to him in the back room of an obscure wine shop: "If you refuse to restore to me that which is mine and to give into my hands in trust that which I have demanded for others, I will shake you by the throat as I would a cur that might attack me. I will drag you through that door, through the hall and the wine room beyond, into the street—and there, if you be yet alive, I will give you and myself into the hands of the police, believing that even in the court of France the right will prevail."

For a man with sloping shoulders we must say that Wheeler was astonishingly confident and cool. To be sure he had a pair of thugs concealed close at hand. Nevertheless it surprised as well as thrilled us when he dashed the contents of his wine glass in Cameron's face. Of course Cameron was upon him in a moment. It was inevitable that Wheeler should nearly have expired in the clutch of his adversary before the thugs knocked Cameron senseless with sand clubs. We hate disloyalty and it can never wholly please us to see blackmailers making money, but we were not without some feeling of gratification as we followed Jules and Henri, the two thugs, in their subsequent faithless proceedings. Did they bind Cameron and throw him into the Seine, according to their clear stipulation with Wheeler? Did they take a meagre 700 francs for their reward and leave Wheeler forever after in peace, as they had agreed? Far from it. They kept Cameron alive and bled the evil Wheeler heroically. They impoverished him so that he was obliged to return to America and become a spotter for the oil trust.

Again we must say that Wheeler was singularly adventurous and intrepid for a man with sloping shoulders. For some time he pursued an exceedingly bold and dangerous career. Finally one of his victims blew him to pieces with dynamite. The reader will wonder how Betsy Tubbs, who was young and pretty, could ever have married Wheeler. "Curse that tongue of yours! What hellish idea has set it harping again about 'settling' with those I have 'wronged.' Now look here, Betsy," shaking his forefinger in her face, "you may stay with me and enjoy such portion of the cash as I choose to spend upon you; or you may go out into the street, where there is always room for women who have neither love nor sympathy for their husbands." Thus violently did he address Betsy in Paris. She was sensible to run away from him, and we were glad, after he was blown up, that she found herself willing to marry Dr. Ross, who had long loved her secretly. The doctor sent young Harry Edgert to ask Betsy if she would not like to go out for a little while in his boat. He sat hopefully in his boat awaiting an answer. Betsy came to him. "Is it true, doctor," she inquired, "that you delegated Mr. Edgert to invite me upon a ride?" "Indeed it is," returned the doctor, "and I beg your pardon for not coming in person. I had a little work upon the rudder, as one of the lines was loosened, and I asked Harry to say to you that the trolling ought to be good this afternoon, and if you cared for it we would go out for an hour." A little formal, but when they got back they were engaged. The reader will rejoice, for the doctor was a good and true man, not at all like the unlamented Wheeler. Distinctly an entertaining story.

Some Recent Fiction.

"A Turnpike Lady" is a little chronicle of the tollgate hamlet of Beartown, Vt., in Revolutionary days. It may be classified as a story of customs and manners of the olden time. It is simple and quaint and harmless, safe to recommend to Sunday school libraries or to be read to the sick or the sleepless. Not much of anything happens except the growing up and marrying off of the two chief families of the old village—the Darbys and the Polkes. They were ardent royalists, and Richard Polke and James Darby drilled and led away the Beartown "Whig Biters"—the defenders of the King. The story is written by Sarah N. Cleghorn and is published by Henry Holt and Co.

"The Tents of Wickedness" are pitched in very unpleasant places. They are inhabited by disagreeable and uninteresting people with bad manners and worse morals. Miriam Coles Harris, who has written a story of their misdoings, lives in Paris and has evidently gathered her ideas of American society from questionable sources. A young and innocent and "elegantly slender" American girl fresh from a French convent is introduced into a social circle made up of the vulgar rich, the déclassé, the divorcée, the frivolous and the ambitious. The story lacks distinction of style as well as originality of invention. The book is published by D. Appleton and Co.

In "Gret: The Story of a Pagan," by Beatrice Mantle (The Century Co.), Gret is the free untrained maid of the woods whom we have encountered before and have regarded with curiosity as she is brought suddenly into contact with fashionable life and is equal to its demands.

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Continued on Eighth Page.

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