

Books of the Week

Conducted by Una H. A. Cool

BOOKS REVIEWED

- "The Point of Honor," by Joseph Conrad.
- "The Fly on the Wheel," by Katherine Cecil Thurston.
- "With Whistler in Venice," by Otto H. Bacher.
- "The United States as a World Power," by Archibald Cary Coolidge.
- "Gilbert Neal," by Will N. Harben.
- "Viva Mexico," by Charles Macomb Flaudrau.
- "The Devil," by Ferenc Molnar.
- "Adventures of a Nice Young Man," by A. I. X.
- "A Week in the White House With Theodore Roosevelt," by William Bayard Hale.
- "The Panther," by Anne Warner.
- "Insect Stories," by Vernon L. Kellogg.

"The Point of Honor"
By Joseph Conrad, author of "Lord Jim," "The Secret Agent," etc. Published by the McClure company, New York.

So perfect a gem of irony as this little book by Joseph Conrad has not appeared in many a day, and the most remarkable part appears to be its author, who has been called "Anglo-Dutch," "Polish" and various other things. It is known that he was a sailor who taught himself English from the bible and his nationality is still obscure.

This tale would have been called exceedingly clever if it had been written by any one to whom English was a native tongue, but it is little short of wonderful that such a feat could be accomplished by a foreigner.

The tale is of the times of Napoleon. Two of his officers quarrel with the slightest and silliest cause imaginable. One is Lieutenant Feraud and the other is Lieutenant d'Hubert. They do not tell their friends the cause of their quarrel and with each promotion it seems necessary to meet on the "field of honor." They fight valiantly all through the wars, often side by side, even saving each other's lives in the unhappy retreat from Moscow; but because of the quarrel they manage to avoid a duel each time. D'Hubert was always advanced in rank ahead of Feraud, so that Feraud would fess and fume until he was advanced so that he would become equal to his rival.

When Napoleon was finally sent to St. Helena, D'Hubert did not lose his commission, but Feraud was exiled. This exile only gave him more time to think about his enemy and he still longed for his life. The last meeting is graphically described and is pure humor. The climax is almost ridiculous, but it ends the strife forever, even though from Feraud's point of view his honor is never satisfied. If one line in the book can be criticized it is the sentence spoken by D'Hubert's wife when she has induced him to tell her the whole story: "Mais, c'est insensé—to think that men are capable of!" It is superfluous for the reason has been so plainly indicated throughout that it weakens an otherwise almost perfect example of irony. While the time has gone by when flings at dueling are from the pleasure of reading this delightful book.

"The Fly on the Wheel"
By Katherine Cecil Thurston, author of "The Masquerader," "The Gambler," etc. Published by Dodd, Mead & Co., New York. Price \$1.50.

It may be reprehensible to do anything but condemn the lovely Isabel Costello, heroine of Katherine Cecil Thurston's novel, "The Fly on the Wheel," but she is so appealing and so more than charming that one can scarcely blame Carey, married though he is, for fling head over heels in love with her.

The scene of the story is laid in Waterford, a small town in Ireland. Isabel comes home from a few years' stay in a French convent, ready to enjoy life. She has become engaged during the last few weeks to Frank Carey, a young man from her home town, who is studying medicine in Paris; but when she reaches Waterford she finds that Frank has told his elder brother and guardian all about it, and there is no end of a row. The brother Stephen realizes that Frank will not give up Isabel (who is very poor) unless she breaks the engagement herself, so he goes to see Isabel. After a rather stormy scene she agrees to break with Frank, but one feels that a lot of the excitement is acting. She seems so taken with Stephen.

She and Stephen become mutually infatuated and the story goes from bad to worse till a crude and very badly done tragedy closes the book. The best things in the book are the excellent character drawings, especially of Father James Baron, a kindly old soul who attempts to help his friends out of their difficulties. Mary Norris, the vicious sister in law of Stephen Carey, is well done too, though it is difficult to admire even the work on such an unpleasant person.

While this book is decidedly better than the last few productions by Mrs. Thurston it falls far short of the earlier work by this author.

"With Whistler in Venice"
By Otto H. Bacher. Published by the Century company, New York. Price \$4.

Otto H. Bacher, the American artist and etcher, spent some years studying in Venice. One day in company with some other art students he was crossing one of the bridges spanning the Grand Canal and saw the American consul with a "curious sailorlike stranger" approaching.

"Boys," said the consul, "let me introduce you to Mr. Whistler."

"Whistler is charmed," the great painter remarked, as he shook hands with the students. When Mr. Bacher's name came to grasp Whistler's hand the consul said: "Mr. Whistler, this is the boy who etches."

The friendship, "one of the best of

my life," says the author, which began then ended only with Whistler's death. Fascinating and whimsical as the great genius was this feeling was as sincere and strong on his part as on the part of the author of these memoirs.

How Whistler worked in Venice—and he worked early and late—how he played; his achievements in pastels, oils, and lithographs; something of the society of painters; the relation of Whistler and Hamerton, the early states of some Venetian etchings, and scores of anecdotes of the artist and his life in Venice, go to make up this delightful new contribution to Whistleriana.

The Whistler as Bacher saw him is well worth quoting:

"Whistler was always scrupulously dressed, ordinarily wearing a sack coat, white shirt, with turn down collar, and white duck trousers; but on rainy days he donned trousers to match his coat. A brown felt hat completed his costume. In wearing evening dress he always omitted the tie. While one might think that this would give him an unfinished look, it did not appear so badly as it might seem. He often said, 'only Whistler would do it.' He always wore eyeglasses attached to a thin black cord—very rarely spectacles, which served him only in close work upon etchings. When he was talking the glasses were dropped."

The illustrations add greatly to the value and interest of the book, many of the Whistler etchings being reproduced from a collector's set never published and showing progressive states of interesting plays.

"The United States as a World Power"
By Archibald Cary Coolidge. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass. Price \$2.

It is now two years since Prof. Archibald Cary Coolidge of Harvard University was called to Paris to deliver the Harvard lectures that year on the Hyde foundation at the Sorbonne. Professor Coolidge chose as his subject "The United States as a World Power"—a subject which appealed strongly to the European critics. The lectures attracted so much attention that the author has developed and expanded them in a volume which is just published. He is very modest about his great work and thinks perhaps his title is too ambitious, but he could not have chosen one more felicitous.

The aim of the book is stated in the following selection from his introduction: "It is a study of the part which the United States plays in the great drama of world politics—a part which cannot help being important and which, although impossible to prophesy about in detail, yet is affected by circumstances of geography and of national character, of history and of tradition, of economic and of social conditions susceptible of investigation."

In style, Professor Coolidge writes more like a traveler and a student of people and conditions than like a college professor. His work is strong and forceful rather than scholarly and characterized always by candor and impartiality.

To an American wishing to know the history and development of his country as well as the probable outcome of mixed questions of the day, no book can be recommended which will satisfy all demands as clearly and as sanely as this one. It is a book which should be in every reference library and will be a never ending source of satisfaction to the reader.

No subject of any importance is omitted, from the Monroe doctrine to the Japanese question, and all are handled with the same ease and sanity. The chapters on the Spanish war and the isthmian canal are particularly interesting, so much information being condensed into a small space.

"Gilbert Neal"
By Will N. Harben, author of "Mam' Linda," etc. Published by Harper & Brothers, New York. Price \$1.50.

Will N. Harben wisely stays in the country which is so familiar to him and sets "Gilbert Neal" in Georgia. In no other respect, though, is this novel like his former work. If one can imagine an Ibsen who does not require deep study and who will not promote rabid discussion, that, perhaps, is Mr. Harben in "Gilbert Neal." The realism of the book is totally unexpected by the reader, who knows the author from "Mam' Linda" and "Ann Boyd," for these strong and simple stories are utterly unlike this tale of forbidden love.

A married man, Gilbert Neal's pastor, is in love with Gilbert's sister, a beautiful, innocent and very young girl. She has been worked upon most insidiously. The minister is ardent in his religion and tells Lucille, the girl, that his wife is indifferent and unappreciative of his efforts in the church and in that way wins the interest, then the regard and finally the love of Lucille.

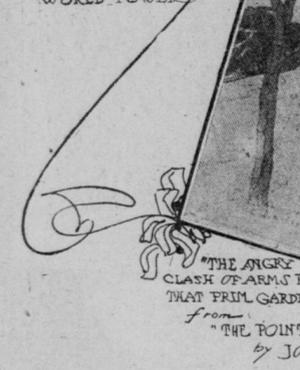
The minister's wife is almost angelic and is really a more important character in the development of the story than is Gilbert. The "affinity" problem is handled in a novel way and one that can not fail to interest all readers.

Gilbert's character is drawn from nature. There is no strain on the credulities in Gilbert. He is the strong, simple man who can see only one right way of living and can conceive of no

ment of foreigners, their morals, the climate—in short everything that can be of interest to the visitor to the fascinating republic. The point of view of the author is in evidence, too, in all he says, and rather adds to the interest, for he is possessed of a fresh and delightful sense of humor.



PROF. A. C. COOLIDGE
AUTHOR OF
"THE UNITED STATES
AS A
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"THE ANGRY
CLASH OF ARMS FILLED
THAT FRIM GARDEN"
from
"THE POINT OF HONOR"
by JOSEPH CONRAD



"A VIEW FROM WHISTLER'S WINDOW"
FROM "WITH WHISTLER IN VENICE" by OTTO H. BACHER

excuse for leaving the straight and narrow path. The best characters in the book are exceptionally well drawn, especially the never do well brother who, after being saved from the penitentiary by Gilbert, leads a mysterious life. One can not but rebel that so much crookedness should prosper, but it is often true in real life. The love of Gilbert's mother for the wayward brother is so natural and her criticism of Gilbert so unjust but so human.

The plot of the story is lively and holds the interest through every page. The story develops strongly the difference between pure and false love, but with no lecturing on the part of the author. The story itself, apart from the very interesting psychological question, is eminently satisfactory.

"Viva Mexico"
By Charles Macomb Flaudrau. Published by D. Appleton & Co., New York. Price \$1.25.

To begin with "Viva Mexico" is the best guide to Mexico that has come to the hands of the reviewer; and it is not a guidebook at all. It deals with modern Mexico as the careful and observant traveler finds it today. It is a series of impressions of Mexican manners and customs more like descriptive conversations—the conversations of returned travelers full of enthusiasm about the country and the people.

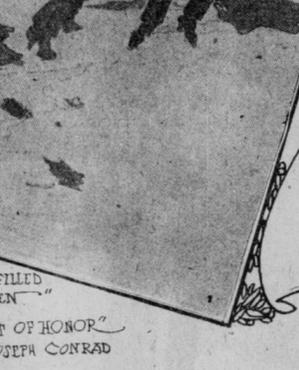
Bits of the country are described, followed by an incident of plantation life, perhaps, or a story all done with fine art and an excellent literary quality.

The book would be of really great value to any one contemplating a trip to Mexico, for it describes entertainingly and accurately all phases of life encountered there. A very clear idea of the country itself and its people is gained, their government and manner of life, their treat-

ment of foreigners, their morals, the climate—in short everything that can be of interest to the visitor to the fascinating republic. The point of view of the author is in evidence, too, in all he says, and rather adds to the interest, for he is possessed of a fresh and delightful sense of humor.



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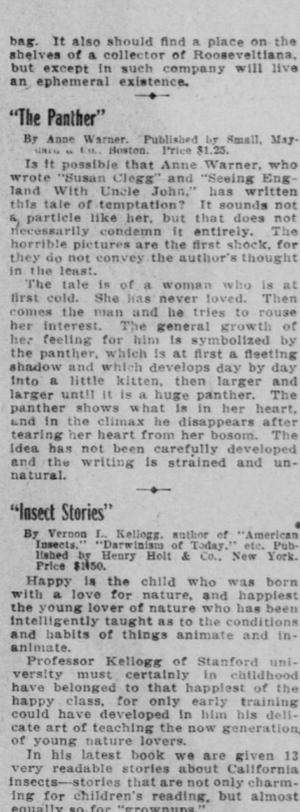
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"The Business Venture Series," and "The Cruise of the Phoebe," is the first volume. This book treats of lobster buying on the eastern coast, and every detail of the cruise from leaving Portland, Me., to the return from a hazardous coast is told in the book. In this book three boys take the cruise for a summer vacation and every day is filled to overflowing with adventurous excitement. Some outside adventures, not to be reckoned as occurrences of every cruise, happen to these boys, making the book doubly interesting to the young reader. (Dana Estes & Co.; \$1.50.)

"The Minute Boys of Long Island," by James Otis, is the latest book by this author in his popular "Minute Boys" series. This book covers some of the most important and exciting events of the great revolutionary struggle. The first reading of the declaration of independence, the destruction of the king's statue in New York, the defense of the town, the battle of Long Island, are all included in the thrilling narrative, which also contains other authentic occurrences, such as treating prisoners from the prison ships in Gravesend bay, a part of the New York story of '76 which has been slighted in other historical romances. (Dana Estes & Co.; \$1.25.)

"In Peanut Land" is a book of verses and pictures by Eva Dean. "Just where it is, is not quite clear. It may be very far from here and still it may be very near. The animated peanuts have all sorts and varieties of adventures, but everything comes out right in the end. (R. F. Fenno & Co.)

Children's holiday books are pouring in; one captivating story with the pleasing title "The Muffin Shop" is sure to hold a high place in the affections of the children. It is a verse book recounting the delights of the muffin man and his shop situated in Pudding lane. The much tried Jack and Jill, the sensitive Miss Muffet, Mr. and Mrs. Spratt, study in contrast, the son of the piper and his spotted pig, and many other inhabitants of Mother Goose land visit the muffin shop and buy muffins at a "penny each." The child is given a real and sparkling glimpse of characters he already loves. The book is by Louise Ayers Garnett, illustrated in color by Miss Hope Dunlap. (Rand, McNally & Co.; \$1.50.)

Laird & Lee have just issued "The Little Masqueraders," an entertaining and instructive booklet of patriotic jingles for the little folk, written by Martha Spangler. The book is illustrated in colors and depicts striking events in American history in a picturesque and catchy style that will be sure to interest the little ones. Among the incidents depicted are Pocahontas and John Smith, Paul Revere's ride, landing of the Mayflower, Boston tea party, declaration of independence, first American flag, Washington crossing the Delaware, Lee's surrender to Grant and Custer's last stand.

"Famous Cavalry Leaders," by Charles H. Johnston, is a book which will appeal to boys and adults alike. It is exactly what its title says of it, and its scope is tremendous. Beginning with "Attila, the Scourge of God," the book gives the lives of "Saladin," "Chevalier Bayard," "Gusavus Adolphus," "Marshal Ney," "Joachim Murat," "Phil Sheridan," "George Armstrong Custer" and many others. Every one of the sketches in the book is interesting and some of the descriptions are thrilling. It is a very useful addition to a boy's historic library. (L. C. Page & Co., Boston. \$1.50.)

"The Cathedrals and Churches of Northern Italy," by T. Francis Bumpus, is the fifth in a series inaugurated by L. C. Page & Co., Boston. If the others are as valuable and interesting as this volume, no more complete set of books on church architecture can well be imagined. In his introductory sketch of Italian church architecture the author states that his purpose is to present a guide to the principles governing the growth of north Italian churches generally and to describe the distinguishing features of the various schools. The author's statements are clear and the laymen will be as deeply interested as the art student in this work.

"Before Marriage" is the second book of good advice to be written by Mrs. Adolphe Hoffman. This dainty little volume is addressed by a Christian mother to her son on the eve of his marriage. It gives chaste advice to both the prospective husband and his bride, and its message will prove most helpful in bringing happiness and permanence into the sacred relation upon which they are about to enter. (The Vir publishing company, Philadelphia.)

Books Received
"The Better Treasure," by Mary R. S. Andrews. The Bobbs-Merrill company, Indianapolis, Ind.
"The Letters of Jennie Allen to Her Friend, Miss Musgrave," by Grace Burdett. Small, Maynard & Co., Boston.
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New Books Briefly Noted
Stanton Davis Kirkham has spent the better part of his life in the great out of doors. As a result of that intimate communion with nature he gave two notable contributions to modern philosophic thought last year, "The Ministry of Beauty" and "Where Dwells the Soul Serene." His essays are those of a naturalist and trained observer presented to the reader with literary charm and rare understanding. The present volume, "In the Woods," contains 15 essays, covering all sorts of out of door subjects. "Songs of the Woods," "Weeds," "The Ways of the Ant," "Autumn Studies," "Laughing Waters," are a few of the titles, and one can not be particularly recommended as better than another. The book is illustrated with some interesting photographs and is most artistically printed and bound. (Paul Elder & Co.)

From the constant (one almost says chronic) appearance of "Lives" of Mary Baker G. Eddy, one concludes that some people must be interested and wish to read them. The latest one is by Sibel Wilbur, who is very evidently a strong partisan of the much talked of leader. This book contains the latest and most important additions to the literature of Christian Science aside from the words of Mrs. Eddy, and as such may be of value to the followers of that cult. (Published by the Concord company, New York.)

James Otis is inaugurating a new series of books for boys to be called

Books that are reviewed or mentioned in The Call can be obtained at **Robertson's** 1539 Van Ness Ave. Next to the White House Wedding Invitations and Visiting Cards Properly Engraved and Printed