The San Francisco Sunday Call

BOOK PAGE OF THE SUNDAY CALL

CONDUCTED BY
UNA H. H. COOL

BOOKS REVIEWED

"*The Innocence of Father Brown,*" by Gilbert K. Chesterton.
"*The Unofficial Honeymoon,*" by Dolf Wyllarde.
"*Mother,*" by Kathleen Norris.
"*Collected Writings of Ambrose Bierce.*"
"*A History of England,*" by Rudyard Kipling and C. R. L. Fletcher.
"*A Gallery of Girls,*" by Coles Phillips.
"*The Jugglers,*" by Molly Elliott Seawell.
"*Love's Purple,*" by S. Ella Wood Dean.

"A History of England"

By Rudyard Kipling and C. R. L. Fletcher. Published by Doubleday, Page & Co., Garden City, N. Y. Price $1.80.

RUDYARD KIPLING

It is quite possible that Rudyard Kipling and his collaborator, C. R. L. Fletcher, did not intend to be entertaining and interesting in the way in which they are to American audiences, but it is equally incredible that two men of such known intelligence could expect readers to take their "History of England" seriously. After finishing the book turn again to the two line preface: "This book is written for all boys and girls who are interested in the story of Great Britain and her empire," and if you have a sense of humor you will laugh heartily, but if you can not control your temper I'm afraid you will put the book in the stove (where it belongs).

The method of writing the book is unique and to be commended. First, Mr. Kipling sings a sort of introduction, and then Mr. Fletcher takes up the theme seriously in prose. When he is weary (or we are weary) Mr. Kipling fortunately appears and sings us a few more verses. Now, this method is not new. Mr. Kipling pursued it all alone in several of his own books, notably "Puck of Pooks Hill," with great success, so we know we like this sort of thing. What we do not like is the offering of this book to children, for when children study history they should know that they study truth. Some one has said that "history is all in one's point of view," and if there is any truth in that speech of foolishness it is exemplified in this book.

The two authors are rabid tories, and when it comes time in the book to explain about the house of commons and the house of lords the chapter is closed by this suggestive little poem:

MY FATHER'S CHAIR

There are four good legs to my father's chair—
Priest and people and lords and crown.
I sit on all of 'em fair and square,
And that is the reason it don't break down.

won't trust one leg, nor two, nor three.
To carry my weight when I sit me down;
I want all four of 'em under me—.
Priest and people and lords and crown.

I sit on all four and I favor none—
Priest nor people nor lords nor crown—
And I never tilt in my chair, my son,
And that is the reason it don't break down.

When your time comes to sit in my chair,
Remember your father's habits and rules:
Sit on all four legs, fair and square,
And never be tempted by one legged stools!

The authors' opinions are shown clearly enough—at the sacrifice of beauty and literary value—though they will have to be modified now for the changed conditions in English laws—evidently changed since the writing of that poem.

The reviewer skipped a number of chapters and found the English version of the American revolution. Now, this is where American readers will laugh or rage, according to temperament. This is the sort of stuff taught to the poor, benighted English children:

"But many of the colonies were full of Puritans and Protestant dissenters, the very men who in King Charles I's reign had fought against the crown. So there was born in all our colonists a spirit of resistance to government in general, and the quite foolish notion that all government is oppressive. Such a spirit might easily lead to rebellion. The colonists, however, knew well that all round them were Frenchmen, Dutchmen and Spaniards casting greedy eyes on their riches, and that against these foes only the English fleet could protect them. So some sort of pretense of loyalty to their mother country was for many years almost a necessity to them. The mother country usually left them to themselves; it never taxed them; it sent them governors, who hoisted a British flag outside their houses and 'took the lead in society,' but did little other governing. Each colony set up a miniature house of commons, or something like it, of its own, and made its own laws on the English model. On one thing only England insisted, that the colonists were to buy their goods wholly from English merchants, and if they produced any goods which England wanted and could not grow herself (e. g., tobacco, rice, beaver skins), they were to send all such goods to England."

A chapter and a half later the trouble which was expected happened. This chapter is opened with the following poem, which we assume to be from the pen of Mr. Kipling:

"'Twas not while England's sword unsheathed
Put half a world to flight,
Nor while their new built cities breathed
Secure behind her might;
Not while she poured from pole to line
Treasure and ships and men—
These worshipers at freedom's shrine
They did not quit her then!

Not till their foes were driven forth
By England o'er the main—
Not till the Frenchman from the north
Had gone, with shattered Spain;
Not till the clean swept ocean showed
No hostile flag unrolled,
Did they remember what they owed
To freedom—and were bold!"

We can not resist quoting a bit of Fletcher's prose which follows that last Kipling outbreak:.

"* * * Our American colonies, having no French to fear any longer, wanted to be free from our control altogether. They utterly refused to pay a penny of the £200,000,000 that the war had cost us; and they equally refused to maintain a garrison of British soldiers. They intended to shake off all our restrictions on their trade and to buy and sell in whatever market they could find. * * *"

The author then naively explains that "we had to fight our colonies and we failed to beat them," and he offers a number of excuses for the failure. After much discouragement and ill treatment from the ungrateful colonists "we determined to withdraw from America." That "determined" can scarcely fail to please American readers.

The book is filled with inaccuracies from cover to cover, but the style of the prose is good throughout, and the greater part of the verse is well worth while. It is, however, a very difficult task to read the book solely for its literary value. The subject matter will surely "get a rise" out of an American audience, and, being human, they can't be blamed. The book is well printed and bound and contains some excellent illustrations by Henry Ford.

"A Gallery of Girls"

By Coles Phillips. Published by the Century company, New York. Price $3.

COLES PHILLIPS

In his "A Gallery of Girls" Coles Phillips presents us to the newest debutante, and moreover, she makes her prettiest bow. There is a charm and beauty about this modern type that is utterly irresistible, and the "Coles Phillips girl" has undoubtedly come to stay, for so long as she vanquishes all new arrivals.

The public is fickle. We have only to invoke the shades of Charles Dana Gibson, Howard Chandler Christy and our own Harrison Fisher for verification. Given a face a bit more beautiful, a foot with a shade more of arch to the instep, a figure a little nearer perfection and an ankle whose slimness outrivals those gone before, and the favorite of yesterday, is forgotten. The public can worship before only one shrine at a time. However that may be, Mr. Phillips' girl has won honor on her merits—merits of beauty, originality and faultless draughtsmanship.

The volume is one of the most beautiful gift books of the year, and contains 40 drawings in the original colors and 40 studies in black and white. All of them deal with the American girl, highbred, perfectly gowned, and, as Mr. Phillips sees her, bewildering in her various phases. She is individual and unmistakably a patrician type, and whether at home or abroad is so pictured.

But the thing which has made Coles Phillips famous is not so much the type—although its beauty is indisputable—as its unusual method of presentation. From a background of solid color he evolves the figure of a girl and her setting, taking care to tone the color of her gown into the exact shade of the mat. The effect is startling in the extreme and the figure outlines in consequence purely imaginary save where brought out here by a dainty silken clad foot or there by a lacey petticoat, or again by an exquisitely rounded arm and a charming, piquant face. It is through his perfection of drawing and his technical grasp of the fundamental qualities of composition that the artist achieves his results.

Among the color pages "Know All Men by These Presents," "Corn Exchange," "Home Ties," "Which?", "Reflections of a Bachelor" and "Net Results" are wonderfully pleasing and remarkably good examples of Phillips' art.

"The Unofficial Honeymoon"

By Dolf Wyllarde. Published by John Lane company, New York. Price $1.30.

One may recognize Dolf Wyllarde's style, which by the way, is excellent, in this latest tale, "The Unofficial Honeymoon," but there is little else to show that the work is from the same pen that gave us "The Rat Trap" of "As You Have Sown." This is a very remarkable book, which tells the experiences of a man and a woman who, during a frightful storm at sea are washed overboard and regain consciousness on the beach of a small tropic island, uninhabited, and out of the line of travel.

The remarkable part of this story is in the study of character; the author showing a knowledge of the effect of such an experience upon both the man and the woman, which reads like an actual experience of life.

The man is a worldly individual, a Major Trelawney. The girl is Leslie Mackelt, sister of a missionary. The man is going to England on leave, and the girl has some business interests, having inherited a fortune. They are not acquainted. The man is at first utterly helpless, and both are shocked into a condition bordering on lunacy. Instinct teaches them to hunt for food, but it is some weeks before they are at all near to a normal condition. Then the man slowly begins to notice his companion, to be conscious of her sex, and to appreciate her many good points. She is in love with him, frankly, but has had a rigid Methodist training, and even if she were sure that they could never be rescued, would still think it wrong to live with him without the sanction of the church. The long love struggle, while interesting, is not the whole thing. The characters are studied very carefully; the island life is described minutely and by one who knows; the rescue, the experience of Leslie with nuns, the life of the two, separated, in England is told as vividly as though it had all happened. The book is intended for entertainment, and it carries out its intentions. It has no other purpose, for the situation of the hero and heroine is too unusual and romantic to produce a problem, though many readers will find much to argue and debate over. It is well written throughout.

"Collected Writings of Ambrose Bierce"

Edited by the author. In 10 volumes.

Wherever and whenever in California three or more persons are discussing writing and writers, the easiest way to break up in a row is to mention Ambrose Bierce. The argument will be about in the proportion of one for and two against. They may not know much about his work, but they have heard that he "roasted" people.

Up to 1898 everybody in California read Bierce because for many years he had written every week in the Argonaut, News Letter, Wasp, and finally, from about 1886 or 1887, in the Examiner. He did "roast" people, and everybody enjoyed it hugely unless it happened to be his turn on the spit. Doubtless it was the roast that the great majority liked best at the weekly spread Bierce dished up for the public.

There were a few, however, who though they discerned something more and better—an incomparable style, satire keener than Juvenal's or Swift's, and above all a scrupulous, unyielding, merciless devotion to what he conceived to be true. It was his axiom that "this is a world of fools and rogues, blind with superstition, tormented with envy, consumed with vanity, selfish, false, cruel, cursed with illusions—frothing mad!" Bierce was the mortal enemy of bombast, fustian and bluff. He made war upon untruth not by dealing in abstractions but by decorticating individuals who were guilty of it, and these he found close at hand. He did not go to history for his awful examples—he found them in St. Helena, Napa, Howell Mountain, Auburn, Los Gatos, Wrights Station, Berkeley, Oakland, San Francisco or wherever he happened to be. Is it any wonder that Californians are divided on the subject of Ambrose Bierce and his work? To mention a few only of the living black beetles (many of them are dead) that he preserved in amber, could it be expected, for example, that Mr. Phil Crimmins, Mr. George A. Knight, Senator George C. Perkins, Mr. M. H. de Young, Colonel John P. Irish and Colonel Dan Burns, would sit down together and agree that Ambrose Bierce is a great or a good writer? What has been quoted as Bierce's axiom may be left to the philosophers and the theologians, but the diversity of opinion among Californians concerning his work has been explained.

As strong a man as Bierce has his admirers, and among these it used to be a question whether his work—any of it—would live. Bierce himself never had any doubt about it. His friends told him he was using a Krupp gun to kill sparrows; that too much of his writing was on fugitive subjects and about persons that would not interest another generation; that he could not reach the world of letters through the medium of journalism. They seemed to forget that although his writing was frequently apropos of current events, he was not in any sense a journalist because he had no concern with presenting any phase of any fact as news. He used current events merely as handy texts for his essays, stories, verses, and to illuminate his creed. In periodicals and newspapers he found the most available medium as many another man of letters had done before, and to his intimates he always maintained that his work had enough of vitality and literary quality to force itself someday into bindings.

The black beetles in amber may call that vanity or egoism, but more likely, in the light of events, it was the ability to take the objective view of his own work and put it to the same tests that he did the work of others. At any rate, his prophecy has come true, and now, 20 years after, we have "The Collected Works of Ambrose Bierce" in 10 volumes. They are "bound sumptuously in three styles," for the remainder of which see the usual patter in the prospectus of the publisher. At any rate, Ambrose Bierce has come into his own—meaning a place on the shelves of the few who know the best in English literature.

Like any other man who has written well (possibly excepting Shakespeare), Bierce had to learn his trade. Of Welsh descent, born in Ohio in 1842, reared in Indiana, he served as a soldier through the civil war and came to San Francisco. He made shift for a time by writing amateurish squibs and paragraphs for the press, and after a year or two went to London. There he became connected with Tom Hood's

AMBROSE BIERCE

weekly paper, Fun, and "found himself."

In 1871 and 1872, under the pen name of Dod Grile, he published two little books, "The Fiend's Delight" and "Nuggets and Dust." These are scarce volumes now, and their author has said that he is not sorry. "Nuggets and Dust" was partly compiled from the Californian papers with which Bierce had been connected, and it chiefly serves to prove that, like Stevenson, he had to learn his trade. For example, the preface contains this sentence: "Doubtless, a riper experience would have taught him to somewhat repress the tendency to sneer at what others are accustomed to regard with veneration." In a description of a visit to Stratford-on-Avon occurs this sentence: "I hope to never again see Stratford." On page 63 is this: "The only way by which I can secure peaceful sleep is to attentively reflect upon the awful fate in store for them," and on page 70 this: "To thoroughly enjoy a country life one must be something of a savage." These are specimens of the split infinitive that, a few years later, made him glad that "Nuggets and Dust" was scarce.

Again, in the same book, a description of Warwick castle contains this sentence: "This stately pile, as which only the tower of London can boast so much of bloody fame, stands, as for centuries it has stood, repelling the silent sapping of time as grandly as it has so often beaten back the noisy storming of the men-at-arms." A writer who had achieved that jumble would be justified in wishing the book that contained it had never been born.

In 1874 George Routledge & Sons published Dod Grile's "Cobwebs From an Empty Skull." This was better stuff. It was a collection of fables and short tales by Bierce from the columns of Fun. He had not entirely sloughed off the split infinitive—you will even find one in the preface—and some of the minor frailties that go with that evidence of bad taste and immaturity; but he had acquired a style, and the book bears out its author's pet theory that clear thinking and good writing necessarily go together—are, in fact, cause and effect. It made for him a lasting reputation in England. William E. Gladstone said of it that it contained more wit than any other book he had ever read, and in British estimation Bierce went to the head of English satirists; but it was to be 17 years before he published another book.

Bierce returned to San Francisco, resumed his work on the local weeklies, and became a holy terror to literary sinners, unscrupulous politicians, bombastic lawyers, all charlatans and the larger kind of crooks. He succeeded as no other writer has succeeded in America. Probably the newspaper was the best medium that could have been devised for him. His style was so clear, so lucid, that the great public did not know he had a style. The people read him for entertainment and as a mental stimulant; and there is no doubt about the fact that his "Record of Individual Opinion" had more readers, week by week, than were ever attracted by any other writer in this country.

All this time he was perfecting his manner and his literary skill, until, conceding that his matter is a subject for controversy or even negligible, it is certain that he became the master of his time in the mechanics of writing the English language. Not Harte nor Hawthorne nor Stevenson had greater skill in selecting the right word, and not one of them could compare with Bierce in placing it where it would do the most good. As a specimen of his felicitous phrasing read this, taken from one of his volumes opened at random; as good or better will be found on any other page: "If Mr. Howells had never written fiction his criticism of novels would entertain, but the imagination which can conceive him as writing a good story under any circumstances would be a precious literary possession, enabling its owner to write a better one." Imagine Henry James or Howells himself trying to convey that same thought! One may think Howells a great writer of fiction, but the subject here at this moment is not what Bierce wrote—it is how he wrote it.

Shallow readers who have only an imperfect acquaintance with Bierce's books have acquired the notion that all he did was tinctured with pessimism or misanthropy and that he had no word for anybody except abuse. Read some of his studies of the greater poets. He even defended Alfred Austin. Read his appreciations of Tolstoy, Victor Hugo, Hawthorne and, nearer home, of Ina Coolbrith, George Sterling, W. C. Morrow, Timothy H. Rearden, Joaquin Miller and Emma Frances Dawson. These are not all, and it is only a dull inattention that can find in Bierce's books nothing but "abuse."

Neither is his range narrow. Art, politics, religion, society, literature, manners, morals, philosophy, will all be found in his table of contents as well as many short bits in both prose and verse on passing fads and follies. Most of his verses are not poetry and did not pretend to be, but read "The Passing Show," "Invocation," "Geotheos," "The Death of Grant" and "A Vision of Doom." "Invocation" alone gives Bierce the title of poet, while his purely satirical verses are faceted and cut and poished like diamonds. Add to this catalog his fables, epigrams, that wonderful store of wit in "The Devil's Dictionary," and last, but most important of all, those marvelous stories in "Can Such Things Be?" and "In the Midst of Life," and the total, variety and quality considered, has not been surpassed by any man of letters in America.

Merely to amuse, Bierce is worth while, for one of his cells turns out spontaneously no end of whimsical quips, as, for example: The telegraph once reported to New York that Max Popper had been chosen secretary of the California state democratic committee. The newspapers there printed the name Pepper. Bierce corrected the error by quoting it and adding: "The gentleman does not pep—he pops." Again, he wrote some jingling verses on Attorney Otto tum Suden and each stanza ended with the line, "Sing Otto tum Suden, tum duden, tum day." Such inventions as "the hauls of legislation" have become part of the popular vocabulary. Describing a bicycle accident to himself while trying to drive his wheel up a hill, he said he "zigged all right, but forgot to zag."

After "Cobwebs From an Empty Skull" in 1874, there was no book until 1891, "an unconscionable long time" for an author to wait. Bierce had popularity on the Pacific coast and recognition among the eastern critics. He was represented in the anthologies and quoted in the literary columns of Boston, New York and London, but it was not until he was 50 years old that his two dozen incomparable short stories were rescued from the files of the newspapers and published in book form by the late E. L. G. Steele, a wealthy San Francisco merchant who happened to know literature when he saw it. The book was published in San Francisco, but in spite of that it served to establish Bierce's reputation. It was soon followed by "The Monk and the Hangman's Daughter," "Black Beetles," "Can Such Things Be?", "Fantastic Fables," "Shapes of Clay," "The Cynic's Word Book" and "The Shadow on the Dial." These publications finally relieved him from his newspaper connection, and he said he felt as if he had taken a bath. Most of the contents of these books appear in this new "Collected Works." As edited by Bierce himself they make up in quality what they lack in quantity.

"The Innocence of Father Brown"

By Gilbert K. Chesterton. Published by John Lane company, New York. Price $1.30.

A perfectly new Gilbert K. Chesterton is discovered in "The Innocence of Father Brown," a group of detective stories which are held together by the character of the very clever cleric, and there will be many readers who will like this the best. The Chesterton of "Heretics," "Orthodoxy," "All Things Considered," and even of "George Bernard Shaw," wrote for the few, and though the few were tremendously appreciative, he could not attain the popular success which is sure to follow a book like this. The style is still brilliant and witty, not too witty for the man (and woman) in the street, but miles above anything in detective fiction which has been written for a century, not even excepting Sherlock Holmes of blessed memory (may he not be resurrected!).

There are 11 of these stories and it will be difficult to decide which one is the most interesting. All tastes can be satisfied, for the stories deal with all sorts of crime. There is "The Blue Cross," a clever case of pocket picking, and the climax is the most astonishing part of the whole tale. "The Eye of Apollo" is another remarkable tale, with opportunities for the reader to solve it in several different ways before the climax comes, when it is quite a simple matter with an explanation which should satisfy any one. "The Secret Garden" and "The Queer Feet" are two other tales sure to meet popular approval. It is to be hoped that

C. K. CHESTERTON.

the author has more adventures to tell of this unusual but very human little hero. The book is well printed and bound and contains some unusually good illustrations by Will F. Foster.

"The Road"

"The Road," by Frank Savile, appears to be at first glance a poor imitation of another book with a similar title, also written by an Englishman. The development of the plot is, however, along quite different lines, and it is a matter of personal taste which makes the better story. This tale concerns the building of an electric road in the Balkan peninsula by an American construction company. It is an exciting piece of work, for the company encounters more obstacles than it could handle if it were not composed of live Americans. Also there are girls, and they have a tremendous lot to do with the development of the plot and the building of the road. It's real melodrama. (Little Brown & Co., Boston; $1.25.)

Brief Reviews of New Books

Prof. Frank T. Carlton of Albion college writes "The History and Problems of Organized Labor," a book whose aim is to present the important facts in the history of organized labor in the United States, and to analyze the chief problems that directly or indirectly affect the labor organizations of the present decade. Among the topics discussed are: The significance of organized labor, labor from the colonial period to the present, employers' associations, government and policies of labor unions, coercive methods, systems of paying wages, arbitrations and trade agreements, the history and present status of labor legislation, employers' liability and working men's compensation, immigration, the sweat shop, child labor, prison labor, the causes and statistics of unemployment, the apprenticeship system, trade education, and the significance of industrial unionism. The book is written in a strong, clear style, and contains a straight statement of facts. Some of the author's conclusions, however, will be open to debate, but the book is of a pertinent interest and value. (D. C. Heath & Co., Boston; $2.00.)

* * *

Frances Foster Perry has written a rather sweet little tale entitled "Their Heart's Desire." It is a love story, pure and simple, and tells how a little, motherless boy craving a mother's love brings two lovers together. The book is daintily bound in holiday dress and contains a number of illustrations by Harrison Fisher. It is a slim little book, requiring scarcely an hour to read, but is better than a Christmas card to send to a friend. (Dodd, Mead & Co., New York; $1.)

* * *

"Grandmother" is described as a "Tale of Old Kentucky" by its author, Sue Froman Matthews. It is a dull story written around a group of uninteresting people who talk an unconvincing sort of dialect and have no reason for existence. The book is dedicated to the Eggleston club of Vevay, Ind., whose members appeal to our sympathy if they are also compelled to read it. (J. S. Ogilvie Publishing company, New York; $1.)

"Mother"

By Kathleen Norris. Published by the Macmillan company, New York. Price $1.

MRS KATHLEEN NORRIS

The novelists who require from 400 to 500 pages to tell their stories will be surprised and piqued to know that the most perfect piece of work of the year contains 172, and small pages at that. This gem is Kathleen Norris' "Mother," and from every point of view it is great. Mrs. Norris has taken for her theme one of the great world problems, but one which has been agitating America particularly for a number of years.

Margaret Paget is the eldest girl in a family of seven children. They are the best type of the American middle class, a good family, cultured and refined, but barely able to make ends meet. The father is a clerk in a bank; the mother requires this book to describe her, and then the half of her glorious character is not told. Margaret teaches school in the small country town where they live and tries to help at home, but she is discontented though uncomplaining, for she sees no outlook and in her inmost soul she questions the right of her parents to have so many children when they are unable to give them the proper advantages through lack of income. When Margaret is given an opportunity for something better she accepts it at once. She goes to New York as private secretary to a rich society woman. There she has every comfort and the luxury which she has craved all her life. The conversation of the women she meets shows that they think as she does about the responsibility of children—they do not have them.

Margaret goes abroad with her employer and while in Germany meets a professor whose home is in a town near Margaret's own. This love is the beginning of Margaret's awakening and she suddenly appreciates her mother's great character. Love is the beginning of it and one speech of her lover's about her mother shows her the rest.

"You know * * * in these days when women just serenely ignore the question of children, or, at most, as a special concession bring up one or two—just the one or two whose expenses can be comfortably met—there's something magnificent in a woman like your mother, who begins eight destinies instead of one. She doesn't strain and chafe to express herself through the medium of poetry or music or the stage, but she puts her whole splendid philosophy into her nursery—launches sound little bodies and minds that have their first growth cleanly and purely about her knees. Responsibility—that's what these other women say they are afraid of. But it seems to me there's no responsibility like that of decreeing that young lives simply shall not be. Why, what good is learning or elegance of manner or painfully acquired fineness of speech and taste and point of view if you are not going to instill it into the growing plants, the only real hope we have in the world? You know, Miss Paget * * * there's a higher tribunal than the social tribunal of this world, after all; and it seems to me that a woman who stands there, as your mother will, with a forest of new lives about her and a record like hers, will—will find she has a friend at court," he finished whimsically.

The little book is not all so serious as this speech; it is full of little bits of humor and genuine human interest throughout, and the publishers do not err in describing it "a beautiful classic."

It was straightened financial circumstances that first turned the attention of Kathleen Norris, whose new story, "Mother," is published this week, to writing. The second of a family of six children who were largely dependent upon her earnings, for her father and mother were dead, it was necessary that she seek some profitable livelihood. She had often felt within her the impulse to write, but a curious lack of confidence in herself, coupled with an extreme shyness, seemed in these early years insurmountable obstacles to literary recognition. Her life, however, was full of interesting experiences and her mental horizon ever broadening. For half a dozen years she was a bookkeeper, librarian, a settlement worker and finally, her natural bent asserting itself, a reporter. Her first position on a newspaper was that of society editor of the San Francisco Bulletin. Later she became a staff writer on the San Francisco Call and San Francisco Examiner. A few of her earliest stories appeared in the Argonaut.

All this took place while she was Kathleen Thompson. In 1909 she married Charles G. Norris, the brother of Frank Norris, author of "The Pit" and "The Octopus," and, leaving her California home, went to New York city. There her first story to be accepted took a prize in the short story contest conducted by the Evening Telegram, her recognition by the magazines following almost immediately.

The theme of "Mother" originally appeared as a short story in a New York magazine, where it at once produced something of a sensation. The editor of the magazine pronounced it the most remarkable and powerful short story he had ever published. Letters from every part of the country came pouring in. So profound an impression did it create that five publishing houses asked Mrs. Norris to embody it in the form of a novel. This is what she has done in "Mother," published by the Macmillan company.

"The Jugglers"

By Molly Elliot Seawell. Published by the Macmillan company, New York. Price $1.

The charm of Molly Elliot Seawell's style has never been shown to better advantage than in this new story, "The Jugglers," which has just appeared. The author has been particularly successful in portraying pictures of theatrical life and her admirers will be glad to know that the tale is in her favorite vein. The time of the story is during the Franco-Prussian war and the characters are a group of traveling players.

Diane Dorlan is the star of the little troupe and is loved by Jean Leroux, who is her partner on the stage. She is ambitious and her player friends think she wishes to go to Paris and study for grand opera. Diane, however, would be quite satisfied to be a great cafe singer, but even that ambition seems a long way off. Graudin and his good hearted wife, the father and mother of the company, are very fond of Diane and very good to her. The character drawing of the Graudins is excellent. Then there is Francois C. Bourgeois, the juggler, who is the great character of the book, though apparently only secondary. He is the black sheep of a noble family, but

M. SEAWELL

secretly loves Diane, and, though a jester and a cynic, he has his eyes open for trouble and protects Diane constantly though she is unaware of it. They stop at Bienville for the winter and there the Marquis Egmont de St. Angel pays violent court to Diane. The story of how Diane discovers his perfidity, his relationship to Francois, Diane's subsequent adventure and final success make an interesting tale. It is not until the last episode, which takes place during the commune, that the author really shows what she can do. Here she rises to dramatic heights, and her descriptive powers prove her place among writers of the first rank. It is not a long tale—scarcely long enough—but it will give a couple of hours real pleasure to any reader.

"Love's Purple"

By S. Ella Wood Dean. Published by Forbes & Co., Chicago. Price $1.25.

"Love's Purple" is an effort on the part of an American writer, S. Ella Wood Dean, to write the story of a woman's quest for love. There is something indecent about the English language—it must be the language—for written in French or Italian, or even in German, the same thoughts do not stir the critics to object. This book has not even the excuse of the story, for it is dull to somnolence. The tale briefly is of a young self-centered girl who is engaged many times, but none of the men are satisfactory. Finally she decides to marry a Russian nobleman, though her parents strenuously object. She believes that he has much money and that that will balance love, for she can then have every material thing she desires. The story of the marriage is absolutely unnatural. On the honeymoon her husband begins to illtreat her, without rhyme or reason, and it grows worse daily. There is nothing in the book to show why he married her—she is not pretty nor rich—and he apparently hates her before the ceremony is performed. She hates him, but lives with him and tells how she pets and cajoles him to get money—it is filthy. She has no lover, but her husband accuses her of unfaithfulness with every man to whom she speaks.

The author has tons of near epigrams and cynicisms which are worked into the story and conversation on the least pretext and they—one supposes—are the excuse for the book. They are not worth it nor is the book worth reading for any other reason.

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"The Incorrigible Dukane"

"The Incorrigible Dukane" is the title of a tale by George C. Shedd, which will delight the lovers of melodrama. It is exciting from start to finish and is packed full of breathless adventures and hairbreadth escapes. Jimmy Dukane irritates his father once too often, and one day he finds he is chucked out with $1, and the message to work or starve. He goes to work on a big mechanical scheme in Nevada and rises but literally from the bottom up. The story is very American and western, but filled with exaggerations. The author's women characters are not real, though his men are fairly well drawn. (Small, Maynard & Co., Boston; $1.25.)

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Patrick H. W. Ross has written a remarkable book on "The Western Gate," and one which the thinkers over the country will discuss. It will not be a best seller nor have a popular success, but people interested in the future of the race and the country will read the book, and, though many will disagree with the author's conclusions, all will have respect for his large ideas. Mr. Ross is an Englishman by birth, but has been naturalized for 20 years. He favors the creation of a free port in the state of Washington, cutting off for that purpose a piece about the size of Rhode Island. Lack of space prevents a discussion of the various points of the book, but it is recommended to all progressive patriots. (Dodd, Mead & Co., New York; 75 cents.)

Books Received

"The Moon Lady," by Helen Huntington. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York.

"Advanced Auction Bridge," by the expert of the New York Sun. F. A. Stokes & Co., New York.

"The Healer," by Robert Herrick. Macmillan company, New York.

"Bunnyville Folk," by Jessie J. Knox. Jenning & Graham, Cincinnati.

"Life, Death and Immortality," by W. H. Thomson. Funk & Wagnalls company, New York.

"Do They Really Respect Us?" by Margaret C. Graham. A. M. Robertson, San Francisco.

"The Sixth Sense," by Charles H. Brent. B. W. Huebsch, New York.

"The Man of Clay," by Hiram W. Hayes. Davis & Bond, publishers, Boston.

"The Centaurians," by L. D. Blagi. Broadway Publishing company, New York.

"Woman's Part in Government," by W. H. Allen. Dodd, Mead & Co., New York.

"Little Lord Fauntleroy," by Frances H. Burnett. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York.

"Memories of Two Wars," by General F. Funston. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York.

"Mother Love," compiled by Ina R. Warren. George W. Jacobs & Co., Philadelphia.

"A Dear Little Girl's Summer Holiday," by Amy E. Blanchard. George W. Jacobs company, Philadelphia.

"Health and Exercise," by Woods Hutchinson, M. D. Outing Publishing company, New York.

"My Larger Education," by Booker T. Washington. Doubleday, Page & Co., New York.

"Followers of the Glaem," by Charles L. Goodell, D. D. Funk & Wagnalls company, New York.

"The Amazing Adventures of Letitia Carberry," by Mary R. Rinehart. Boobs-Merrill company, Indianapolis.

"Is There Anything New Under the Sun?" by Edwin Bjorkman. Mitchell Kennerley, New York and London.

"The Man Who Understood Woman," by Leonard Merrick. Mitchell Kennerley, New York and London.

"A Motor Flight Through Algeria and Tunis," by E. B. Ayer. A. C. McClurg & Co., Chicago.

"Manual of Ship Subsidies," by E. M. Bacon, A. M. A. C. McClurg & Co., Chicago.

"One Thousand Books for Children," by Penrhyn W. Coussens. A. C. McClurg & Co., Chicago.

"The High School Debate Book," by E. C. Robbins. A. C. McClurg & Co., Chicago.