

Serious Books vs. Fiction

By E. S. Martin.

THE habit of reading the more substantial books seems to have taken hold of a much larger proportion of the people of the British Isles than of Americans. And even that is not all. We seem not to be gaining the habit, for the proportion of light reading in the current mass of new literature seems to be increasing.

Why that is, and whether it is a temporary condition or something more serious, is matter for discussion. I suspect it is one of the habitual complaints of literate mankind that the readers of the generation just passed read better books than those of the generations in being. It is no fault of the publishers, for there are plenty of publishers who are eager to print the best books they can hope to sell. They won't print many books that no one will buy, because such a practice as that, if it became habitual, would be incompatible with continuance in the publishing business. But they have an interest, which is more than a mere pecuniary interest, in what they publish, and would much rather find their necessary profit in a book that they can be proud of than in one which can never do credit to their name, however much it may help their pocket.

To be sure, the more substantial books are in competition with all the great books that ever were printed. If readers neglected the good new books in order to read the good old ones, we might regret it as something detrimental to the book publishing business and the interests of living authors, but we would not find in it a sign of decaying culture or degenerating taste. But it is not the competition of the old books that limits attention to new ones, for whoever has learned to read the one is by so much the likelier to read the other. Who has the habit of good reading and the appetite for it will read what suits his appetite if he can get it. The trouble is that the appetite is not often formed.

If you are to make a silk purse, you must have the silk. You cannot make a reader of good books out of any human material that comes along. You must catch a mind proper for the job. Not all good minds are adapted to good reading. You find very able people who read few books, mostly trash, and people of less ability who read more, and much better ones. You find also interesting differences in the facility with which different people take in the sense of printed words. Some people from childhood read very much faster and with less effort than others. Their eyes seem to connect quicker with their brains, and their perception of words and rows of words is almost instantaneous. Other people never entirely get past the need of pronouncing, mentally, each word.—Harper's Magazine.

The 400 is Now : : : "The 1100"

By F. Townsend Martin.

IHAVE been interested in society ever since I was eighteen years old. New York society has gone through its formative stage. Its society now resembles that of London, the oldest and most absorbing society in the world.

People say, casually, "The great balls of the past have been discontinued because the city is too large." That is not the point. Society is too large—not the city. Society grows with the city. I should say there are 1,100 persons in society. I daresay, this figure is staggering, revolutionary, but I believe this number is accurate. Yet I know some women who would say that 100 covers completely the number of persons they would care to know.

New York society is beset by a new idea, which is as unsatisfactory as it is perilous. It develops a narrowness of thought and the most extreme boredom. Society is set-riden. There are the Meadowbrook set, the Tuxedo set, the Southampton set, the Winchester set, the Lenox set, the Alken set, the set that meets in Palm Beach, in Alken, and in Paris.

Mrs. William Astor's retirement as the leader of society marked a new epoch. There has been a new set since.

FLEET LEAVES TOKIO

After Splendid Reception By the Japanese People

VESSELS HOMEWARD BOUND

The Departure of the Big Ships the Prettiest Feature of the Week—Tokio Resumes Normal Condition After a Week of Delirium.

Tokio, By Cable.—After a week's suspension of almost every kind of business, because of the presence of the American fleet in Japanese waters and so that fitting welcome might be given to the American officers and sailors, Tokio is resuming its normal conditions. Already many of the decorations have been taken down, although every one is yet discussing the remarkable features of the past few days.

President Roosevelt's messages to the Emperor was presented to him through Count Komura, the foreign minister, and the Emperor probably will make a reply soon, but there is no reason to expect that the Emperor's message will contain other than a graceful acknowledgment and an expression of gratification at the President's warm words of appreciation. Nothing could possibly exceed in the public mind in Japan the significance of the Emperor's previous message.

The departure of the fleet Sunday morning was one of the prettiest features of the week. The flagship Connecticut slipped her cables at exactly 8 o'clock. She steamed past the Louisiana and saluted and was followed by the remainder of the first squadron. When the eight ships had passed, the Louisiana led the second line, and the entire fleet then formed in single column.

As each of the American battleships passed the head of the Japanese column the crews of the ships of both nations cheered enthusiastically, and the band of both the American ships played the Japanese national hymn. When the last of the sixteen ships was saluting, the Connecticut was invisible on the horizon. Within exactly fifty minutes the entire manœuvre had been completed.

Seven New Cases of Cholera.

Manila, By Cable.—Seven new cases of cholera were reported in this city for the day ending Sunday night. The slight increase in the spread of the disease is ascribed by the authorities to the many gatherings of the people on Saturday night and Sunday and the feasts that accompanied the assemblies. The situation is not considered to be grave and the health department feels as though it has the epidemic well under control, expressing no alarm over the increase. It is probable that the cases

OLDEST EDITOR DIES

At the Ripe Age of Ninety-Four Years Col. Richard Benburg Creecy a Distinguished Journalist Passes Away—His Influence as a Writer Was Great and He Was a Terror to the State's Enemies During Reconstruction Days.

Elizabeth City, N. C., Special.—Deepest gloom is cast over the city in the death Thursday morning at 9 o'clock of her oldest, most honored and most revered citizen, Col. Richard Benburg Creecy. Colonel Creecy, while always bright, had been gradually falling away for months and his death was not unexpected. He was entering into his 95 year and would have celebrated the occasion on the 19th of December. Colonel Creecy was one of the State's most learned and beloved and had the distinction of being the oldest living editor in the world. He was also the oldest living alumnus of the University of North Carolina.

Colonel Creecy was born at Greenfield Chowan county, and was reared in Edenton. He moved to Elizabeth City in 1843 and began the practice of law. The year following he married Miss Perkins, daughter of one of the largest planters and slave owners in this county. Colonel Creecy won reputation as a writer by correspondence to different leading newspapers and during reconstruction days need for a strong newspaper was most apparent. Colonel Creecy, of this city; Edward Wood, of Edenton, and T. J. Jarvis, then of Tyrrell county, established The Weekly Economist and elected Colonel Creecy as editor-in-chief.

The great power and influence wielded by the brilliant writer's pen is now a matter of history. No man in the State did more for the South's cause and no man was hated and feared more by the carpet-baggers and sealawags of that day than he.

Colonel Creecy's wife died years ago but he is survived by five daughters; Miss Nannie and Henrietta; Mrs. E. F. Lamb of Texas; Mrs. W. M. Lawton of New York; and Mrs. D. C. Winston, of Edenton; and three sons: Joshua and E. P., of St. Louis, the latter chief of police of that city, and R. B. Creecy, Jr., this city.

Firebugs Busy in Norfolk.

Norfolk, Special.—Incendiarists are still working in this city, three fires in the business district having been reported between midnight and 6 a. m. The first, at the wholesale notion establishment of I. S. Fine & Co., caused \$5,000. The second, at the office of the United States Express Company, and the third, at the City Hay and Grain Company's establishment, were extinguished in their incipency. The chiefs of the fire and police departments conferred with the Board of Control on the situation and heroic steps are to be taken to apprehend the incendiaries.

OUR SCHOOLS

By PROF. WILLIAM H. HAND, University of South Carolina. Paper Number Seven.

The Course of Study.—There is a small but turbulent class of otherwise writers who periodically belabor the public schools. In their nightmares they see thousands of tender children murdered or maimed in the public schools, and give vociferous utterance to so much wild nonsense that they have but one effect—making people refuse to heed them even when they point out some real defect. Some of these writers have warned us against one great evil which we have gone on ignoring—that of an overcrowded course of study. To be brief, some years ago our educators realized the poverty of our common school course of study, confined almost exclusively to the three R's. A just demand was made for an enriched course, giving a wider range of subjects to the pupils. A number of subjects has been added. Now, in order to encourage individual initiative, I take it, the State Board of Education has never prescribed a maximum or a minimum number of subjects for any course. Instead it has adopted textbooks covering a rather wide range of subjects, and grouped these into yearly grades, leaving each school to make up a course or courses from this list.

The building of a well-balanced course of study is the work of an expert. Comparatively few teachers lay claim to that stage of fitness. Yet each teacher, or at least each principal, experienced or inexperienced, sets about to make his own course. Theories, prejudices and tastes begin to clash for the mastery. One teacher is an arithmetic crank, and his course has but little else in it; another's favorite subject is grammar, and he makes his pupils analyze and parse everything in sight; another has no taste for geography, and he practically omits it; another "does on" poetry, and the whole school is put to memorizing and reciting gems; while a lot of thorough-going teachers who take everything literally, put the whole adopted list into one course, and give it to every pupil in the school.

A great deal of ignorant and unjust criticism is made against the frequent and useless change of textbooks. It would be neither wise nor defensible to have a child use the same reader through two or three grades, or to use the same geography through the 4th, 5th and 6th grade for instance. If the book is suited to his advancement when he begins it, it is reasonable to say that it is not suitable two or three years later in his life. And if a teacher were to keep the child of one of these watchful guardians of the schools in a fourth reader, for instance, for three years, this same guardian

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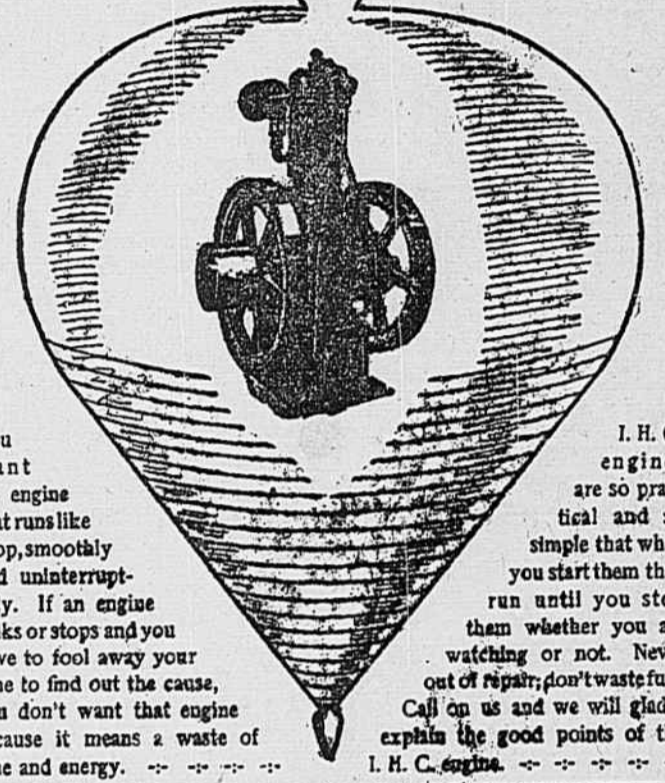
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E. J. Norris,

There's a Good Time Coming

By United States Senator Lodge, of Massachusetts.

THE Republic of the United States is in no danger of ruin in a business or in any other way. The resources of the country are greater than they ever were before. The energy of the people, if it is not paralyzed by too much substitution of government for individual effort, if it is left to march along the old roads, which it followed from the days of small things to the present days of greatness—the road of independence, the road of individual enterprise, of determination to succeed in the battle of life—will assert itself.

Let those old American habits continue to dominate in the United States and tread the doctrines of socialism under foot. The wealth of the world is here in our soil, in our mines, in our factories. This decline of values is but a passing ripple on the surface of the great sea of American life and action, and all we need to do is first to try to prevent a recurrence of that alarm which so paralyzed business last autumn, then to aid in the restoration of public confidence, and lastly to perfect a banking system worthy of our time and country. I believe that the Aldrich currency bill will tend strongly in this direction and serve our initial and immediate purpose. I believe it will bring back in a large measure the confidence which has been impaired, and help to set the great car of American business moving once more upon the pathway of triumphal progress which it has followed for more than a century.

When Wealth Getting Becomes a Crime

By John A. Johnson, Governor of Minnesota.

PERSONALLY I would rather be able to write a book that would live a hundred years than be able to amass wealth that would enable those who inherit it to live for generations in luxury, and yet the amassing of wealth may be of vast industrial service to the country and to those who seek honest work and wages.

But WEALTH GETTING BECOMES A CRIME when the man obtains it by the sale of all his finer instincts, by the sacrifice of his character, by the violation of the nation's laws and by trespass upon the rights of others to the pursuit of liberty and happiness. It is this spirit and not the thing which determines the nobility of a career and the degree of success.

THE HIGHEST VICTORIES MAY BE WHAT THE WORLD CALLS FAILURES.

Woman and Hat.

See the woman with the hat! Is the hat adorned with the feathers of living birds? Yes, the hat is so adorned—with feathers torn from living birds. If the woman knew that the feathers have caused the birds almost as much pain as they are causing the other woman whom she is kissing on the street, would she not be smitten with remorse?

Quite likely, for she is naturally not hard-hearted.—Pack.

Goodness Nose!

When the clerk informed the customer that the handkerchiefs were seven dollars and fifty cents each, the latter remarked, "No, sirree! That's too much money to blow in!"—Judge's Library.

In the sandy deserts of Arabia whirling winds sometimes excavate pits 200 feet in depth and extending down to the harder stratum on which the great bed rests.

Orville Wright Improving Nicely.

Washington, Special.—Orville Wright, the aviator who narrowly escaped death in the accident to his aeroplane during a flight at Fort Myer, Va., five weeks ago, will soon be able to leave for his home at Dayton, O. His most serious injury was a broken thigh and the splint was removed from this Sunday. It was found upon measuring the left leg, the one injured, that it is but a quarter of an inch shorter than the other. An X-ray examination of the fracture showed that the knitting of the broken bones has been perfect.

Chapel Hill Man Elected President of Peat Producers' Society.

Toledo, O., Special.—The second annual convention of the American Peat Producers' Society has adjourned to meet in Boston next year. Joseph H. Pratt, Chapel Hill, N. C., was elected president. Robert Ransom, Jacksonville, Fla., was elected vice president for the Southern States.

To Have Lobbyist at Capital.

Baltimore, Special.—William H. Anderson, superintendent of the Maryland anti-saloon league, has been chosen by the national headquarters committee to represent the national league at Washington as acting superintendent during the coming session of Congress. Supt. S. E. Nicholson, of Pennsylvania, who has been serving in that capacity, owing to the fact that the Pennsylvania legislature will be in session this winter, will be compelled to give his entire time to looking after legislation in that State.

Effort at Suicide Successful.

Spartanburg, Special.—Will Burnett, a well-known young white man who shot himself in the head with a pistol last Sunday, died at his home as a result of the wound. Burnett was one of ten men who were arrested a short time ago for taking part in the mob that sought to lynch John Irby, the negro charged with attempting a criminal assault upon a young white woman.

Korean Insurrection Over.

Tokio, By Cable.—The so-called insurrection in Korea is practically ended. The troops are still on active duty, but the insurgents have dwindled to merely a disorderly element. It is stated that Prince Ito, former resident general, a Steuul will probably return to Korea early in November. Two thirds of the Japanese troops in north China will be withdrawn in a few days.

troops are scouring three counties for the murderers. Fearing a possible raid by the night riders, the State troops are maintaining two lines of sentinels following the posting of notices that if the Governor did not discontinue the hunt he himself would be kidnapped.

Lost His Life for a Hoop.

Lynchburg, Special.—Hooprolling cost Walter Davis, a 7-year-old colored boy, his life in Amherst county Sunday. The hoop rolled into the river and the boy followed it, being unable to check himself. He has not been seen since.

News Notes.

President Roosevelt in a letter to Senator Knox demands that Mr. Bryan state whether he is committed to Gompers' labor legislation program, and points to the Pearce bill as a dangerous invasion of property rights.

Explorer Evelyn Baldwin plans to float on an ice pack across the Polar sea from Alaska to Greenland.

The Pacific fleet is expected to reach Panama from its South American cruise the same day the Atlantic fleet reaches Hampton Roads—February 22.

Textile Workers to Hold Next Meeting in Charlotte.

Schenectady, N. Y., Special.—The eighth annual convention of the United Textile Workers of America, which has been in session in Cohoes, closed Friday. Charlotte, N. C., was selected as the place for holding the next convention. John Golden, Fall River, Mass., was elected president.

Big Lumber Plant Burned.

Pensacola, Fla., Special.—News reached here of the destruction by fire Thursday of the lumber milling plant of the Salye-Davis Company, at Southport. The fire, of unknown origin, was fanned by a high wind and destroyed the entire plant, entailing a loss of \$100,000.

By Wire and Cable.

President Roosevelt has signed a contract to become associate editor of the Outlook on his return from his African trip.

Philadelphia doctor to prove his contention that vaccination does not prevent smallpox challenges an advocate of its efficacy to sleep with him with a smallpox patient between them, the challenger never having been vaccinated, while the challenger has been.

grade school in one of our towns. In that course are prescribed fifty-five separate texts, exclusive of copy books, drawing books, scratch pads, etc. In the school are ten teachers. In another ten-grade school, with four teachers, there are sixty-four texts prescribed. In the first mentioned school there are ten separate texts required in the seventh grade; in the second mentioned school eleven texts are given in the eighth grade.

Every child ought to have the best obtainable book in every subject he pursues, and he ought to have all the books he needs—books suited to his age and advancement, but I protest that the above mentioned courses are out of reason. To undertake to teach all these books to any one child in the allotted time would make old Socrates catch his breath. In the first case it would seem that the course given was measured by the physical endurance of the teachers—ten teachers pitted against ten sets of children. In the second case the physical endurance of the teachers was no limit—four teachers pitted against ten sets of children.

I am far from advocating the three R's in the common schools, but our schools are undertaking too much, in the quantity of work and the kind of work. School work must be circumscribed by time, space, and the ability of the pupil. Take the eighth grade course already mentioned. Of the eleven texts prescribed, nine are to be pursued at the same time. It is no figure of speech to say that if a child's time is the dividend of a long division, the quotient, or result, must be small. For instance, in the first two years of a child's school life the schools very properly devote much time and energy to oral reading. But by the time he reaches the fifth grade so many things are crowded upon him that he does but little oral reading while under instruction—a few minutes each day, perhaps. Hence when he reaches the high school his oral reading is scarcely intelligible, and he is often unable to get through from the printed page. Indeed, many a college student and not a few teachers in our common schools cannot read as they should read on entering the high school.

These crowded courses of study have another fatal weakness. In the same school and in the same classes is a wide range of ability, taste and opportunity, among the pupils. The bright and precocious mind, the sluggish but retentive mind, and the dull mind are found side by side. The pupil of robust body and vigorous health, the one of feeble body and delicate health, and the one with ample time for every task and the one with scant time for any task all go to the same school. The unparadiseable sin of the schools is to bunch them together, give them the same work, and require all to measure up to a common standard. God made them in different molds, and it is use-

The business of our out-of-town friends receives the same careful attention as that of our local depositors. The accounts of careful conservative people solicited.

less for the schools to try to ignore the differences. It is unnatural and it is wrong. To march abreast twenty-five children in one grade up to a given dead line is neither possible nor desirable. Children with diverse abilities, tastes, and opportunities should not be required to progress with even step through such diverse subjects as mathematics, language, history, and drawing. If a boy can do the language work of the sixth grade, but is prepared for only the 4th in mathematics, put him just where he is fitted to go. "Oh, he would not fit into my program," says some one. Then make the program fit the boy. The possibility of doing this is one of the great advantages that the small country school has over the closely graded school.

There is another thing which needs to be dinned into the ears of our people—both teachers and patrons—that it is folly for a school with nine grades and two teachers to undertake to do what a school with nine grades and six teachers accomplishes. The two-teacher school may be the better school within its limitations, but it must keep within these limitations. A one-horse farmer who would claim to be able to grow as many crops and as large crops as a four-horse farmer would grow, would be laughed at. Little David could not fight in big Saul's heavy and cumbersome armor, but with a sling and a pebble he did effective work.

Atlantic Coast Line Surgeons Meet.

Jacksonville, Fla., Special.—The fourth annual meeting of the Association of Surgeons of the Atlantic Coast Live Railroad Company was held in Jacksonville Tuesday, about sixty members being in attendance. Some interesting papers were read, and at 3:30 o'clock the physicians accompanied by their wives and daughters left on the steamer City of Jacksonville for Sanford at which place the convention adjourned Wednesday morning. A meeting will be held on the boat at which the new officers will be elected.

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OVERHEARD IN THE BLEACHERS. "The buckwheat cakes at my boardinghouse always remind me of a baseball game." "How so?" "The batter doesn't always make a hit."—Puck.