

Women are now found in all callings, from ship captains and pilots to railway engineers, from preachers to insurance agents, from fine steel workers, clock and watchmakers to blacksmiths and livery-stable keepers, from physicians and surgeons to the tenderest, wisest and most faithful of nurses in houses, hospitals and on battle-fields, from ranch owners controlling vast areas of land and countless cattle to women who successfully cultivate flowers and vegetables for nearby city markets, from women who desire political power and prominence to those who fear to wield public influence and object to assuming its duties. Women work amazingly well with typewriting instruments; they make fine stenographers, bookbinders, typesetters and use sewing machines, work in mills, in tobacco factories and in mercantile establishments, none of which occupations were known to our grandmothers. Few pursuits that the latter followed so wisely and skilfully are known to the women of to-day. Certainly the old methods of accomplishing anything, sewing excepted, are mysteries to them.

Singers and writers among women were not unknown a hundred years ago, but how rare they were! To-day they are

embarrassingly numerous. So numerous indeed are they that our women who can choose are becoming artists in cooking, millinery, dress making and other practical pursuits instead and are as justly proud of these attainments as if they were sonneteers, romancers, lecturers, painters or elocutionists. Perhaps this is an unwelcome state of affairs to certain of our sisterhood, but thinkers who study the march of human development, cannot discover any impropriety in such a choice.

When the first woman in this country—Miss Mitchell, of Dover, Maine—had passed the preliminary examinations to enter Bates' College, the governor of the state offered her a scholarship, but she politely declined it. Having earned her own money to pay for this high indulgence, she said: "Oh, give it to the brethren! I can look out for myself." She did look out for herself and now has the proud distinction of being the first New England alumna to marry and make a beautiful and happy home. Only cheap or envious men grudge to woman all the room she wants or needs for the growth of her latent talents, and in America there are very few who are thus ignoble in their attitudes toward the sex of their sisters, wives and daughters.

A. B. LONGSTREET.

AMONG THE LATEST BOOKS.

From D. Appleton & Company, New York:

The Scats of the Mighty, by Gilbert Parker.

His Honor and a Lady, by Mrs. Everard Cotes (Sara Jeannette Duncan).

The Dancer in Yellow, by W. E. Norris.

A Winning Hazard, by Mrs. Alexander.

The Picture of Las Cruces, by Christian Reid.

False Coin and True? by F. F. Montrésor.

To Gilbert Parker the world is greatly indebted. He has given it a keenly vivid and detailed account of England taking Canada away from France. Ordinarily details are wearisome. Parker has made them fascinating, and there is not one too many. Parkman did much for us in that he furnished us historic facts of early Canadian life in a dignified and orderly manner, and Mrs. Catherwood has kneaded them with romance. Parker has searched still further and deeper into antiquarian treasures than did either and has given us a tragic history of Canada during its wildest times. That deathless human element, love between man and woman, is strung jewel-fashion through every one of its great events. No writer has a finer gift for brilliant, epigrammatic conversations and witty repartee.

Much of the literary charm of *The Scats of the Mighty* is in those precise and noble sentences which finely-bred men and women at the date of this historic romance habitually used and which Parker has beautifully reproduced. The passing of this stately fashion of conversing that was once sacred to good manners is a sad loss to social intercourse. The hero is a young British soldier, held as a hostage of war, but suspected of being a spy. His seven years' captivity was made tolerable by the loyal and wise love of a French maiden. A character portrayal of one man, the son of King Louis XIV. and a French peasant, is an absorbing study of inheritance: contradictions of person and mind. It is all told in a swift, nervous manner that is possible only to a pen of force, fire, passion and genius. The cruelties of its epoch, the murderous intrigues of a warfare within and without a beleaguered city that was being held by riotous and greedy men and women, are reproduced with a fierce realism that is as rare as it is wonderful. It is not easy to convince one's self that any one of its strange events did not happen as described.

His Honor and a Lady is disappointing in nothing that a story should contain. It pictures entrancing scenery in East India, atmospheres that are laden with a perfumed, shifting beauty and a people who are wholly alive. Its women are mostly pretty and foolish, to suit the social life of English governmental circles in India. Two are excepted—its heroine and one other who is sub-heroine. This pair are delightfully human and entrancingly satisfactory. They are not portrayed personally—neither are its chief male actors, except incidentally—their conduct describing them so vividly that Mrs. Cotes' readers retain a vividly materialized portrait of each as the story develops and they are left in memory as actualities after the tale

is concluded. The sad trail of thought which follows its pitiful description of present corruption among East Indian rulers is accepted willingly because of the large intelligence it includes of to-day's Oriental life.

The Dancer in Yellow is a realistic study of an English danseuse who is by no means the sort of woman generally meant when this person is written of or spoken about. Her career is followed, her character is analyzed and, all things considered, she is no worse and much better than many who believe themselves as much her superiors morally as they are socially. The woman who diverts jaded minds and pleases exacting eyes is not beyond our gratitude, even if she is outside the line we draw for dinner guests—and marriages. This story is well worth reading. It commands the respect of generous minds who apprehend the necessity of being popular in order to win theatrical success. A tender memory trails after her pathetic and valorous life.

Mrs. Alexander never writes a stupid story, nor does she deal in physiological, sociological or psychological issues. She introduces her readers to persons of whom they need not be ashamed to speak and to events that bring no blushes. *A*

Winning Hazard is ventured by a sweet, strong and charmingly courageous Irish girl whose happiness is found in bearing her share of work, economy and want with a merry countenance. She deserves success in her hazard and she wins it in a manner delightful and unforeseen by readers who usually claim to "see the end from the beginning." The mystery of the ending is no small part of its wholesomeness.

Habitual novel readers who like best those happenings that are farthest afield will be enthralled by Christian Reid's *The Picture of Las Cruces*. It is as wild as the country of its setting. Its people, who are sharply and closely contrasted with those of Northern birth and education, also of cooler temperaments and judgments, are to us as sunshine and storm to misty skies and peaceful Summer rains. This romance of Mexico lets its readers into the very hearts of its natives and into its homes where the stiletto flashes and is aimed surely after provocations that would stir but slightly our cooler tempers. Like all Christian Reid's novels, its plot is carefully wrought out of sharply cut and agreeably contrasting materials and conditions which are ingeniously and pictorially arranged. Happily, she seldom stoops to local vernacular, a catching trick of too many novelists of Southern birth and undoubted cleverness.

It was clever of F. F. Montrésor to place an interrogation point after the title of the fascinating story named *False Coin and True?* Each character is wrought in so masterly a fashion that he and she stand sharply outlined against the color of the lives they lead and each is vividly gray—if gray can be vivid. There is always a fine quality in this author's stories, whether told of ignorant or cultivated, stolid or sensitive, rich or poor people, and there is always more than one of his persons who are upon intimate terms with their conscience.