


## ONE ESTIMATE OF MR. BARR.



Mr. Julian Ralph, the well-known magazine writer and newspaper correspondent, writes of MR. BARR as follows: 

*"You have read his short stories, of course, now gathered together in a book called 'The Face and the Mask.' If so, you remember 'The Bruiser's Courtship,' and 'The Typewritten Letter.' Everybody talks of them, and they are good, but the story that made me stand right up and bow to the man is that one in which he depicts the conditions on board a transatlantic liner that has a hold full of burning cotton. It is so clever that you scarcely believe it can be done, even after you have read it. You are made to share the interest of the passengers in a silly case of petty rivalry between two women, while, at the same time, you obtain a secret and startling knowledge that all the passengers are being carried along on top of a volcano that may belch at any instant. You draw an easy breath when a sister ship is hailed and stops her engines, as you think, to rescue your ship full of acquaintances.*

*"But, Heavens! She is in even a worse plight, and Death is astride her prow, also! Nobody knows all this but you and the officers of the two ships, and when both are rescued it all comes out—as nobody else ever would have thought of bringing it out—in the 'Ah, really; do tell!' sort of chatter of two frivolous persons who meet on the shore. Did you read the story? I really think there is more skill, more imagination, and more genius in that little trifle than in many a fat novel that has made a sensation in the last two years. \* \* \**

*"'In the Midst of Alarms' is nothing but the story of a story-teller, a born story-teller, who comes swinging into your library with a head full of fun and lively spirits and good nature, blended with a very cunning knack at repartee and bright dialogue. You are never for an instant bored or sorry or ashamed that he came. You can introduce him to anyone, and he will roll up the curtain before his stage and set his characters moving through his charming comedy before the children are sent to bed, quite as fittingly as when the old man is alone in the library, cigar in hand, and feet upon a second chair."*