

of the manuscript of "The Last Leaf" and other illustrations add to the value of the work.

From D. Appleton and Company, New York:

*A Humble Enterprise*, by Ada Cambridge.

*The Sentimental Sex*, by Gertrude Warden.

*Yekl, a Tale of the New York Ghetto*, by A. Cahan.

*A Journey in Other Worlds*, by John Jacob Astor.

*Familiar Trees and Their Leaves*, by F. Schuyler Mathews.

Ada Cambridge writes clean, natural, interesting stories, her latest, *A Humble Enterprise*, being delightfully domestic and wholesome. It is a tale of Melbourne and, in a retrospective way, measures and weighs acquired and inherited positions, character and pretence, and shows, as if unintentionally, the differences between them. Virtue has its reward and it is delightful to follow its approaches toward the recognition of its worth. Perhaps it is because of its date in this peculiar century that courage and practicality characterize the women of a family bereft of support, while the man is a cheap fellow, without self-respect and living for the eyes of his social superiors. The sweet naturalness of this simple romance will charm and satisfy where thrilling adventures would stir, worry and weary and leave an unpleasant wake of memories.

The title of Gertrude Warden's novel, *The Sentimental Sex*, is one of several interesting and not too agreeable surprises. She describes the sex alluded to by one individual and this one is a man! The story opens in Australia, its hero being a fatherless boy reared by a good mother and a money-getting uncle. His ideal of womanhood was established by his gentle and sweet mother's character and life and it was rigidly correct—so rigid, indeed, as to be inflexible. Of course, he was disappointed in the women he found in the lower literary circles of London. The story having been written by a woman, its readers cannot escape a painful curiosity about her intimate knowledge of a sex which she describes as utterly coarse and almost if not quite without heart—saying, of course, the aforesaid mother of the sentimental hero. However, it is well told.

If, as seems likely, *Yekl* was written by a Jew, he must have blushed as he wrote. How could one of his race have divulged the cravenness of Suffolk Street, here denominated the "Ghetto of the American Metropolis?" It is a terrible picture of toil and moral degradation. A Jewish divorce and two consequent marriages arrange a lurid climax for a story that does no credit to the literary gifts of its author.

No one can justly accuse the Astor family of lacking imagination since William Waldorf upset history in Italy, and John Jacob overturned the laws of gravity by discovering and using its counteract, as told in a wondrous tale of experiences that almost obliterate the splendors of Bulwer's *Coming Race* and Rider Haggard's *She*. During the visit of the hero to Jupiter and other planets by means of the harnessed energy of what he calls "apergy," hooded in a dexterously made balloon, he hears the flowers sing and sees birds carry messages; he goes to Paradise and Sheol, is a spirit in the heavens, visits graveyards, sees ghosts and meets monsters, plans to blow up the Aleutian Islands to allow warm Pacific Ocean currents to flow through Behring Straits and thus raise the temperature of our Alaskan possessions to agricultural requirements, and does many more wonderful things, all of which are delightfully well described.

*Familiar Trees and Their Leaves* is an illustrated volume devoted to advancing our intimacy with inarticulate friends. We know human beings by their faces and call them by their proper names. F. Schuyler Mathews shows us by pictures and descriptions how to treat trees with which we are associated so that we may befriend them as they do us. He quotes Whittier:

Bring us the airs of hills and forests,  
The sweet aroma of birch and pine;  
Give us a waft of the North-wind laden  
With sweetbriar odors and breath of kine.

"Every one," he writes, "loves the trees, though he may not know it, and it often happens that those love them best who know them least." This valuable and charming book affords a formal presentation that will, with opportunity, ripen into a loving intimacy with these leafy comrades.

From the Lothrop Publishing Company, Boston:

*Mopsy, Her Tangles and Triumphs*, by Kate Tannatt Woods.

*Making Fate*, by "Pansy" (Mrs. G. R. Alden).

The publishers in a note call *Mopsy* "a story for girls." It is equally a book for boys, also for men and women who want to know in what manner they may do their share towards

helping the poor and ignorant to better conditions mentally, morally and materially. The story is told agreeably and the interest is well sustained. Its plot is so tangled that its gratifying unravelling will absorb readers of all ages. Of course, many of its coincidences are almost too happy to be probable and a few of the characters are too good to be quite true, but in neither case are the conditions indicated better than our ideals of the best, and have we not come to believe—almost—that the ideal is the real?

*Making Fate* is a curious mixture of the religion that can be talked and that which can be practiced, of sentimentality and personal piety, of love-making and prayer-meetings, in almost irreverent fashion. If personal religion is truly devout and reverent, it is not discussed at afternoon visitings. A place for all things, "Pansy," and vital piety is for conduct and the closet.

From Frederick A. Stokes Company, New York:

*The Master Craftsman*, by Sir Walter Besant.

*From Whose Bourne*, by Robert Barr.

*The Finding of Lot's Wife*, by Walter Clark.

Walter Besant wrote books that compelled reflection and a wider and kinder-eyed observation of those persons who did not very much concern us until he showed us that we ought to consider them with human and humane interest. Sir Walter has found himself, since he was knighted, in a mood to discuss the value of titles and weigh their influence against character, conduct, practical issues and individuality. His latest story, *The Master Craftsman*, could not have been written until he had acquired a title. What, he makes one of his heroes say and do would once have been accounted a rank growth of envy, and his "Craftsman" a vulgar aspirant for social recognition. Misjudgments of the author's meanings are now impossible. The value he sets upon prevailing social customs will be accepted by many a man who needs reformation in those little things that, if ignored, will close doors to him that he is worthy by his attainments to find wide open. Even character is influenced by customs, as one of the personages of the story found out after years of scorning evening clothes and the proper uses of fork and napkin. Many of the lower routes to political power are pointed out, and, little as he respects them, when he finds that there are no other paths leading to what he wants he takes them at as clean and easy stages as he can find. He begins by scorning such conventions but finds them both profitable and agreeable when he is farther along. He even goes so far as to admit that his old unpolished shoes and working coat were offensive when worn at the wrong time and place. Many a man whose vanity refuses to let him inquire about *les convenances* will bless Walter Besant for this story.

The mystery of an accident that was supposed to have been a crime is solved by two sets of detectives, one working in this life and one supposed to be invisible to mortal sight. In *From Whose Bourne* Robert Barr pictures the disembodied as the only live folk, and visits them with much misery when they do not attend solely to the affairs of the world they have reached. Looking after the interests of those not yet dead to the flesh, he represents as a painful and almost, if not quite, useless undertaking. He may know of what he writes, but it is not likely he does. Had he finished the sentence from which he clipped off the title to his little book, conclusion would have been made without reading through his bit of romance.

Alfred Clark found Lot's wife. At least he tells the story of her alleged discovery in a cave in a desert. Her brilliantly beautiful salt statue blinded many who ventured into her retreat, maddened others and killed scores of travellers. Indeed, to believe Alfred Clark, bodies preserved by the salt in the air and water lie in vast numbers in the cave of Lot's wife. But prayers and miracles rescued and restored the English travellers who people the story. A sheik's beautiful daughter is one of its heroines. Novel readers who like to be carried quite beyond the ordinary facts of this prosaic state of existence will be delighted by this original tale.

From Lee and Shepard, Boston:

*Blind Leaders of the Blind*, by James R. Cooke, M. D.

This is the story of a blind lad who became a wise and good man through much tribulation, and among its characters figure many bad people, some good ones and several that are very clever. It carries its readers from a Southern plantation peopled by warm-hearted men and women, to Beacon Street and Boston clubs, to Kansas and its wide spaces and on and on up and down the country, establishing a curious interest everywhere. For the blind man a mystic combination of twelve metals is devised. Placed upon his brow or eyes, he can see and with this power strange things come to pass.