

LITERATURE

THE FILIGREE BALL. By Anna Katherine Green.

THE author of this story of mystery and grisly horror is a mistress of the science of deduction, and has proven herself to be the peer of Lecocq, Dupin, and Doyle. The clan of the pen stand at salute.

Although the facts are given without unnecessary obfuscation, they are so startling and so adroitly handled that they arouse and baulk the curiosity to the last page, hailing the reader along with interest wrought up to an almost unendurable pitch. Of a truth, the sated, novel-reader will find *The Filigree Ball* fresh and thrilling.

Veronica Moore, in a girlish freak, is married in an old mansion in Washington, which she had inherited from her father, but which had stood unused for years because of the sudden and inexplicable deaths of two men, who at different periods, were found dead on the library hearthstone.

Just before the marriage service, a man named Pfeiffer, a self-bidden guest, unknown to anyone present, is found a corpse on the same hearthstone. The bride is kept in ignorance of the awful fatality till after the service, when the guests and waiters, terror-stricken, flee from the house of mystery.

Two weeks later, the youthful bride was found dead on the same hearth, shot through the heart, and with a revolver tied to her wrist by a white ribbon. Why had she come to the scene of these tragedies? Was it suicide? Was it murder?

It was proven at the inquest that she had quarreled bitterly with her husband two days previously and that he had visited the deserted house sometime between the quarrel and his wife's death. Did he kill her? Was it her sister who loved the bridegroom, and was traced to the house the night of the murder? Or was it her uncle who was heir to the property and was also proven to have been in the house at the moment of her death?

The author has riveted these incongruous links into a complete chain, and has given us a startling and entirely unexpected denouement. If the story has a moral, it is that there is only one thing to do always—the right thing.

The Bobbs-Merrill Co., Indianapolis.

THE CONQUERING OF KATE. By J. P. Mowtray.

THE author of this book is now known to be the late Mr. A. C. Wheeler, a journalist who wrote under the pseudonym of *Nym Crinkle*.

He tells us in the preface that the work is "a romance of a passing phase of American life written *con amore*, out of the imagination, but dealing as it passed with some mysteries of our human nature that are not passing phases, but abiding problems."

The plot throughout is well-imagined, well-constructed, well-sustained. It is full of life, action, and thrilling human interest.

The heroine, *Kate Bussey*, becomes engaged to a wealthy Englishman named *Journingham*, in order that she may redeem her estate, which is heavily mortgaged, thus pledging her hand while her heart was engaged elsewhere.

When *Journingham*, who is a London exquisite of the first-water, crosses the ocean to claim his American bride, he finds that she has already repented of her hasty acceptance, but is willing to sink her feelings to duty much to the disgust of her lively but practical sister *Sylvia* who tries to persuade her that she is not a worm to be picked up without a squirm by the first cock-robin that comes her way.

Journingham is eventually murdered by *Fol Heckshent*, a ruffian who reminds us of the fact that when God marked Cain, He did not throw the brand away. We think the author has treated *Journingham* too radically. It would have served all the purposes of the story equally well had he