

## Ideal Fiction

Public Library  
Should Contain  
Good Novels

By SAM WALTER FOSS

THE IDEAL attitude of the public library toward fiction should be one of severity, tempered by toleration. A public library should buy all the good novels and buy them in large numbers. The bad novels it should not buy at all. All a public library, then, has to do in the matter, in reference to any novel, is to discover whether it is good or bad.

This is a very simple thing to state, but a well-nigh impossible thing to do. There are easy-going readers who think there is some good in all novels, and there are implacable haters of modern fiction who stiffly maintain that, at present, no good novels are written at all. From a committee made up of the implacables, the easy-goers and intermediate types of critics the public librarian should get varied estimates of all the novels published, and from these varied estimates draw his own conclusions.

These conclusions will frequently be wrong, but he will have lived up to the best light he has. He will probably find some good novels. To deny that good novels are written today is to make a too sweeping impeachment of our literary output. Let the librarian do his best to find these good novels and then duplicate and reduplicate them many times.

It is undoubtedly a misuse of one's time and a perversion of his intellectual faculties to read fiction, even of the best quality, exclusively. No one knows better than the librarian that there are a large number of readers who never do read anything but fiction. They have lost the power to wrestle with books that deal with realities. The fiction drunkard has lost the intellectual stamina needed to clutch and grip the great thinkers who write real books—science, philosophy, literature. Much fiction has made them mentally flabby—their mental muscles are paralyzed by intellectual dissipation. They are literary drunkards, and all good librarians have an interest in their reformation.

Good fiction presupposes a considerable degree of intelligence in its readers. If it deals with the eternal verities of human nature it must make its readers interested in many and varied domains of thought. A good novel by a real thinker should stimulate its reader to broad investigations, and, sometimes, to long-continued research. It is hard for a librarian, even with the co-operation of many helpers, to select the small percentage of good fiction from the large percentage of the bad. His action, whatever it may be in the matter, will not be without vociferous protest on the part of the public. But let him do his best and abide in complacent good nature.

Sam Walter Foss

Aside from all ethical reasons why capital punishment should be forever abolished I beg to mention a more potent one. I make my appeal now in the name of economy.

We all know that in most cases the expense in the prosecution is in direct ratio to the financial rating of the accused, but even where four men are sentenced to be hanged within two months of the date of their crime there is a certain amount of money spent by the state. It seems hardly fair that the public should be taxed for this purpose needlessly.

Again, there are many instances where the family of the murdered man become the charges of the public at large because the only bread winner has been taken from them.

Where the convicted men are executed society is forever placed beyond the possibility of drawing upon the wrongdoers for the support of those who have suffered most keenly.

The public is put at a double expense, the expense of the prosecution and the support of the sufferers.

There should be indefinite imprisonment, first and foremost for the purpose of making good to society, to as high a degree as possible, for the harm done.

The work done by the prisoners should be at a living wage so that the very source of the privation caused by crime should have an opportunity to make restitution.

If once the principle is decided upon the method can easily be discovered.

The school should furnish the training formerly furnished by the farm and the home, or the education of the child will be defective in the most important respects.

It can no longer be merely or chiefly an institution of learning, as it could content itself to be a century ago. It must furnish training in skill and ingenuity, in planning and doing, as well as in learning and abstract thought. It must educate for efficiency and power.

We have fine buildings, good equipment, but the system under which our teachers are working is antiquated. It must shift its emphasis from mere increase of learning—or memory—

increase of physical, mental and moral power and efficiency.

Such a change will force its way here but slowly against the prejudices of parents and public, who would have even the baby devote himself learning something "useful."

Who comforts the wife murderer? Every day we read of some brutal murder and the next day we read of the notes of sympathy and the flowers sent to the murderer by tender-hearted women.

His trial drags on and on until he has been pitied by women from one end of America to the other and finally he is either acquitted or convicted hero.

Women's influence should be exercised to make a country-wide law that would execute a woman murderer as nearly instant as would be compatible with justice and with no sympathy whatever shown him.

A mighty few such convictions would have more effect than dozens of convictions under the present system, where the murderer is followed by dozens of women.

## PEERLESS LEADER OF THE CHICAGO CUBS



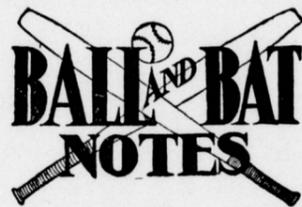
Frank LeRoy Chance as Seen by Cesare.

By HOMER CROY.

Frank Chance is "The Peerless Leader" to all America with W. J. B. just coming in sight around the bend. W. J. may be the last syllable when it comes to a crown of thorns, but what does he know about first base? When it gets down to real peerlessness, Chance of Cook County has got the Lincoln leader lashed so tightly to the mast that he can't move an eyebrow unassisted and unabated.

Frank LeRoy Chance (honestly) was born in California, was a catcher on the Washington College team and in the winter time lives at Glendora, same state. From the first pro. team he was on—the Fresno (California) club—he was picked up and derricked to the Chicago Cubs, where he still sits with one hand on the throttle, the other on the sand lever and the safety clutch between his teeth.

He is one of the most superstitious men in baseball, but having 13 for his lucky number. When on a Pullman it would take a straight-jacket and a new cable to make him sleep anywhere except in lower 13; if the club gets a car with only twelve berths he writes 13 on the door and doubles up in the stateroom. He refuses to change his shirt as long as the Cubs are winning; he's very firm about this and cannot be won over with either pleading or powder. After the budding bruises have had a lucky streak he has to remove his Cluett with a kneaded rubber eraser.



Mansfield, Ohio, has traded First Baseman Frank Reynolds to Racine, Wis.

A. D. Dodson, Jr., is the new president of the reorganized Galveston club.

Frank Rock has been made secretary of the St. Joseph Western league club.

Managers McGraw and Bresnahan have five-year contracts with their clubs.

Spike Shannon, released by Kansas City, would like to land a job as an umpire.

All the recruits look good at present, but wait a month and many of them will vanish into the past.

John Dovey, formerly of the Boston National league club, will, according to report from Louisville, act as scout for Billy Grayson this season.

Buffalo will give Charles Pugh, a shortstop, another trial this year. He is a semi-pro who warmed the Bison bench for a while last summer.

Joe Cohn of the Spokane club wants the Northwestern league to take up the plan of numbering players recently adopted by the Pacific Coast league.

Hugh Duffy has signed a pitcher named Mathias Zleser. The former Sox leader is a diplomat and is making himself solid with all nationalities of people.

The Newark fans are all certain, and they are backed up by Joe McGinnity, that Bill Loudon will be the find of the season. He is to be played at third by Hughie Jennings.

Johnny Evers, the brainy member of the Cubs, is angling for the purchase of the Albany (New York State league) club. Johnny is not figuring on quitting the big league, but he wants to be a magnate on the side.

Del Howard says that he has no plans for the summer, but if any club wants the services of a good slugger as well as a political speaker he says that he will consider the proposition.

The temperance clause that was inserted in the contracts of the Pirates last year was of great benefit to the team in the estimation of Barney Dreyfuss, and he has himself signed

## CATCHER AS MANAGER

Problem as to Why They Make Best Leaders Unsolved.

"Red" Dooan and Roger Bresnahan Do Not Find Duties Too Arduous to Prevent Them From Playing in Game.

Every year somebody rises to remark that the bench manager is superior to the man who directs his club's affairs from the field. You can prove this by several cases. You can prove it isn't so by just as many. Therefore, like the ancient query as to the Age of Ann, the answer is not yet.

But here is one line of dope you have some foundation to argue on: Catchers make good managers, whether they lead from bench or behind the bat. Of the 16 major clubs 6 of them are piloted by catchers or ex-catchers. Why the backstop should blossom forth as a manager isn't apparent, unless, perhaps, he has been so busy bossing the pitchers that the habit grows to include the entire club.

Two of the catcher-managers are actively engaged behind the bat and do not find their duties too laborious to prevent them from being top-notchers as participants. These two are Roger Bresnahan of the Cardinals and Red Dooan of the Phillies.

Cornelius McGillicuddy, when he lugged that impossible name into the big league, was a receiver of rare worth. The only reason he quit receiving was to become head of a club. His work with the Athletics has been a great accomplishment.

Frank Chance, termed the "Peerless Leader," when the Cubs were at the hey-day of their glory, started as a catcher. Then he went to first base, because there was nobody else on hand to occupy that position. Harry Davis also was a catcher, but gave it up to play at the initial station.

It is certain the catcher-manager who can warm up his own pitchers is going to have the inside track in se-



"Red" Dooan.

lecting the box artist. When one works with a pitcher day in and day out he comes to know the occasions when he has the "stuff." The catcher realizes if his pitcher's ball isn't breaking right or if the fast ball hasn't the hop. Of course, a lot of flingers are slaughtered on their best days, but that is part of the game. In the long run it works out that the pitcher who is right on a certain day does better than a fellow who hasn't his best assortment of foolers.

No ball club ever went very far without a star catcher, with the possible exception of the Detroit Tigers, and they possessed such an unusual array of hitting talent that they were exceptions to the rule. Lucky indeed is the club that has the manager in the strategic position behind the batter and able to do sterling yeoman duty day in and day out.

As a demonstration of what intelligent catching means, look what happened to the Cardinals when Roger Bresnahan quit working last autumn.

Johnny Kling, who was taken over from the Cubs by Boston and handed the managerial reins after Fred Tenney has failed, will get a chance to show his worth this season. Kling is certainly one of the best catchers in the game, but just how he will work with the manager's troubles will be seen the coming campaign. Fred Tenney himself broke into baseball as a catcher.

Hard Hitters in American.

Every team in the American league last year had at least two outfielders who hit for .300 or over, with the exception of the St. Louis Browns.

Half Million in Athletic Field. Los Angeles Y. M. C. A. has expended over \$450,000 on its new athletic field and grounds.

## WONDERS OF THE DEAD SEA

Interesting Trip Around This Body of Water Told by Jacob E. Spafford.

Jerusalem. — An interesting trip around the Dead sea was made in a motor boat by Jacob E. Spafford, a member of the American colony in Jerusalem.

In circumnavigating the lake four or five very fertile plains or ghors were met with. "These plains," writes Mr. Spafford, "naturally bring to mind the connection of the Dead sea with Sodom and Gomorrah, the 'cities of the plain,' that were overthrown. They have been variously placed on every side of the sea.

"These plains and the small oases at Engedi are the only points where life of any kind and water are to be



Defile Leading From River Ammon.

had. This evidently was a little paradise in the time of Solomon and is frequently mentioned in the Old Testament.

About ten miles from Engedi lies the peerless natural fortress of Macada (Sebbeh), first fortified by the Maccabees, then used as a place of refuge by Herod. At the foot of the tableland can be seen the Roman wall of circumvallation and the two Roman camps on either side of the small ravine.

"The fortress," which is 1,700 miles above the sea, has steep sides at about an angle of 75 degrees and cannot be approached, except from a connecting neck called the Serpentine. A more inhospitable place or one more disadvantageous to besiegers could not be imagined.

"Eight miles away is Jebel Usdum, a mountain of rock salt rising to a height of 500 feet. In this mountain is a large cave which was explored to the extent of about 200 yards, at which point a tapering cylindrical shaft of about 20 feet in diameter was discovered, piercing the solid rock salt 80 feet high, as though through polished marble, evidently the effects of the rain.

"Great snow white stalactites hung from the ceiling. The approach to this mountain presents most fantastic appearances of walls, buttresses, parapets, projecting towers, etc., caused by the stratification and lay of the salt boulders.

"A little south of Masada lies the rich Ghor-el-Mizra. Here and elsewhere about the apple of Sodom described by Josephus."

## CHEESE DENOTES THEIR RANK

Swiss Family Found Without Aged Variety of Delicacy Is Scorned.

Lucerne.—The English, the Germans, and the Norwegians are great consumers of cheese, but the people of Switzerland surpass them all. The cheese of Zermatt is so hard that one is obliged to scrape it or cut off chunks with a hatchet, and its use is considered most important on all ceremonious occasions. The rank of a Swiss family is known by the age of its cheese, and the more affection or respect a guest inspires the harder is the cheese which is cut in his honor. It is said that there are families in Switzerland whose cheeses date from the first French revolution, and these are served only at baptisms, weddings and after funerals.

The harder in every family is guarded with care and the cheese is named. Upon the birth of a new heir a cheese is made that takes the name given him or her, and that particular cheese is never under any circumstances cut until the boy or girl grows up and is married. On such occasions each of the guests takes a piece of cheese from the bridegroom and from the bride and drinks to their felicity, the cheese held aloft.—Harper's Weekly.

Sold Water Tower to Farmer.

Chicago.—Lloyd Moulds, just in from the farm, liked the looks of the old North side water tower, and "con" men immediately sold it to him for \$26. A policeman arrived in time to save his money.

Was Wrapped in Film.

New York.—A moving picture film 1,000 feet long was wound about the body of Victor Weiss when he was arrested by police, who charged him with robbing a film company's plant.

## Plan to Compel Criminals to Work

By SARAH BLUMENTHAL

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## Too Much Emphasis on Mere Learning

By Prof. John M. Tyler, Amherst College

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## Comforts for Men Charged With Murder

By Agnes Hall

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Ralph Craig.

games at Stockholm next summer. Craig was expected to score heavily in the 100 and 200 meter dashes. He declared that he cannot leave his position for the length of time that training and the trip requires.