

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.

Plan to Compel Criminals to Work

By SARAH BLUMENTHAL

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.

Too Much Emphasis on Mere Learning

By Prof. John M. Tyler, Amherst College

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—to 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 to learning something "useful."

Comforts for Men Charged With Murder

By Agnes Hall

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 pitted by women from one end of America to the other and finally he is either acquitted or convicted here.

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 to court by dozens of women.

Picturesque Spring Hats



TWO of the prettiest of many wide-brimmed hats are pictured here. One is a pressed shape of hemp faced with a changeable silk and bound with velvet. The crown is finished with a fold of velvet at the base. Two long uncured ostrich plumes repeat the two colors which are blended in the silk. It is the management of color that gives character and beauty to this simple and graceful shape. The shape of deep lavender hemp is of the right shade to harmonize with the facing of silk which is gray, blue and rose woven together. The feathers in blue-gray and rose-gray combinations seem to have been made expressly for this particular hat. The narrow binding of velvet is in deep lavender.

Another hat made of a vari-colored

braid (known as sacre) shows the top crown covered with velvet in green (the prevailing tone in the braid) and a piping at the brim-edge of the same velvet. This is a simple model with much style. There is a graceful variation in the width of the brim and a clever tilt, these with the slight droop convert the shape into a background for the face. The crown is low and rather small. It is a shape which can be worn by almost any one.

Clusters of small compact roses with green and bronze foliage and small buds are mounted flat to the brim at each side. This is one of several trims which look well with this shape. One will go far before finding a hat so simple and so good.

JULIA BOTTOMLEY.

MORNING ROBES ARE DAINTY

Elaborate Ornamentation Allowed on Costumes to Be Worn at Breakfast.

Breakfast robes are being made in most ornate style with flouncings and ruchings of lace, adorned with satin rosebuds. The dresses are completed by shoes to match and dainty little caps of lace adorned with flowers.

A charming version of the breakfast toilet was to be seen recently in one of the shops. The foundation of the dress was white satin, veiled with pink tulle and flounced with white lace. A series of flowers caught up the lace flouncings, and the cap which went with it had a frill of lace framing the face prettily, with clusters of flowers at the sides.

Some of the simple house frocks are filled in at the throat with folds of tulle in V shape, while others are made with high transparent collars of the tulle, edged along the top with a narrow band of satin. Satin, after tafetas, is the principal material for the house frock this season and there are charming little dresses in crepes of silky weave, trimmed with lace and satin folds.

In length the skirt of the house frock touches the ground all the way round and the sleeves are long to the wrists.

LINGERIE EFFECT



White lingerie frock with fichu and bands on bottom of tunic of flit lace, edged with white ball trimmings. Hat of white taffeta with white roses.

Baltimore Suit.

An unusual, but extremely smart color combination was seen on a Baltimore girl the other day, says the Sun of that city. Her suit was a severe model of ink-blue velvet and her bonnet-shaped hat, also of velvet, was trimmed only with an immense bow of coral satin. With it was worn a set of black furs.

PRETTY GIFT FOR TRAVELER

Pin cushions of Novel Designs Make Acceptable Tokens Between Parting Friends.

Penny dolls made of china are the foundation of cunning little pin cushions, which look like ballet-dancers at first sight, but on second glance it is discovered that in lieu of fluffy skirts they wear balls of brightly colored satin, silk, Pompadour ribbon or tinsel cloth. To dress one of these cushion-dolls, wind a strip of inch-wide cotton about the trunk, from the waist over the left shoulder, back to the waist again and over the right shoulder and then tack it with stout thread. That is the basis for the fluffs of cotton-scented with sachet powder—which must be put on to form a symmetrical ball that is covered with white, soft lichen and finally with the fancy silken material. When finished, the doll's hands, feet and head only are uncovered and no matter how many long pins are stuck into her, their points are scarcely likely to reach her trunk.

Pin cushions of fancy ribbon, velvet or silk of oblong shape have three plain plump corners and one that is trimmed with two square double leaves of silk which fall over both its sides and, when their baby ribbon strings are untied, reveal several inside leaves of embroidered flannel for holding needles of various sizes. At the other end of the cushion and set directly at the center of its shortest edge, are ribbon loops by which the cushion may be suspended. This is the ideal steamer or traveling pin cushion and makes a most acceptable bon voyage gift.

Lace-Edged Dollies.

In making a set of round dollies for Christmas gifts one woman made the discovery that by stitching narrow hems in the edges with a rather long machine stitch she could very easily crochet linen thread lace on the edges, catching a loop of the linen thread in each machine stitch.

A simple wreath of scattered daisies and leaves was embroidered on each linen circle, then a two-inch edge of lace, resembling torchon, was crocheted about the edge of each. The effect is wonderfully good. The work is easily done, making a charming set for gifts.

Combinations in Shoes.

White suede or glaco kid uppers are familiar on patent leathers by this time, but some of the new combinations are not. For instance, tan uppers on black, black uppers on tan, white buckskin on fabric. Some of the low shoes, or the shoe part on boots with kid uppers, are of tan or black velvet or suede, stitched over with narrow silk ribbon in a diagonal effect.

IDEA AN AMERICAN ONE

DEVELOPMENT OF THE TRAIN DISPATCHING SYSTEM.

Like Most Railroad Improvements, the Scheme Was Evolved and Perfected in This Country—Its First Workings.

The train dispatcher is an American development of railroading. While Europe finds it feasible to move trains by "staff" from station to station, United States conditions have indicated a totally different method.

In 1851 two passenger trains were running toward each other on the Erie railroad between Jersey City and Port Jervis. On the east-bound train, says the Railroad Man's Magazine, rode the general superintendent of the road, Charles Minot.

A telegraph line had recently been erected along that stretch of road. It was considered a great curiosity. Some people believed that in time it would prove to be of service. The majority were content to hold the opinion that it was a useless freak contraption.

The two trains were scheduled to meet at Monroe. Trains at that period traveled by time table and prearranged schedule. Imagination had not progressed to the point of conceiving a disarrangement of programs.

On this occasion the east-bound train found on arriving at Monroe that the other was half an hour late. There appeared nothing to do but remain there, according to custom, and await the tardy one.

Nothing else appeared possible to anybody except General Superintendent Minot. He refused to be bound by tradition. He promptly wired to the west-bound train to wait at Turners, the next station, until the east-bound met it. Then he wrote an order for the conductor and engineer of the latter to proceed to Turners.

The engineer, it is said, refused to obey the order. Disobeying the time table seemed to him to be like fracturing the Decalogue. He declined to take the risk. Thereupon the general superintendent climbed into the cab and himself drove the engine to Turners. This is said to have been the first time the movement of trains was directed by telegraph in America.

SAVED THE OVERLAND FLYER

Much Courage and Presence of Mind Shown by Seven-Year-Old Girl of California.

But for a seven-year-old girl, the second section of the eastbound Overland Limited would have been wrecked at Alta, Cal., recently. The heroine is Ileen Martin, daughter of Alfred Martin, a section foreman of the Southern Pacific. She flagged the train just before it reached the broken rail. The Martin girl and her little sister have been in the habit of watching for the block signal, near their home, which tells them when trains are approaching. After the train enters the block they have ample time to go to the station and watch it come in, and later get the Martin mail. One day the children set out to watch for the signal. Before reaching the block Ileen discovered a broken rail on the main line near a switch. Realizing the danger, the clever girl hurried back to her home. Her mother and older sisters were out. With rare presence of mind she telephoned the telegraph office at Tule. The telegraph operator replied that the train had already entered the block and that he could not stop it. By this time Ileen's 14-year-old sister, Alma, had returned. The two girls then ran to the railroad track and succeeded in flagging the Overland flyer when it was but a short distance away from the broken rail.

Easier to Halt Than Start.

A locomotive with 10 cars must travel 5 miles before it can attain a speed of a mile a minute. But at this speed it can be halted by air brakes in 700 feet.

New Russian Time System.

Russia is about to adopt the 24-hour system on all her railroads—the numerals on the clocks running from one to twenty-four.

MADE PRETTY POINT OF LAW

Astute Lawyer Secured Verdict From Railroad Company by His Convincing Argument.

The story is told that in the early days of the railroad in the west there was a farmer who owned two well-bred and useful dogs, named Major and Tige. The dogs one morning chased a stray hog down the road and stopped to play at the railroad crossing, with the result that Tige was struck by an engine and killed. The owner promptly brought suit for damages against the road.

Damage suits were a new thing at that time, and there were many neighbors and sympathizers present at the hearing. The engineer swore that he gave a sharp blast of the whistle as he approached the crossing. It looked as if the railroad company was "to go scotfree," but the attorney for the farmer knew his justice.

"Your honor," he said, "it is required by the statutes in such cases made and provided that when any person or domestic animal is up a railroad and is seen by the engineer, he must sound his whistle. In this instance, your honor, there were two domestic animals innocently playing on the track, and the whistle was sounded only once, when it is a positive legal requirement that it should have been blown twice, once for each dog."

So convincing was this argument that the country justice would not even give the railroad attorney a hearing, and awarded the plaintiff the full amount of damages sued for.—The Green Bag.

DINING CAR IS THE HEAVIEST

Some Interesting Comparisons Between Its Weight and That of the Other Coaches.

The heaviest of all the cars in a "limited" train is the dining car, which is, ordinarily, of a weight in excess of the other cars by 10,000 or 15,000 pounds. Between the car construction and the necessary kitchen equipment and icebox contents, a full-size standard dining car tips the scales at 140,000 pounds when ready to make its customary division run. Therefore, on the principle that in case of collision a passenger is safer in the strong, heavy coach in the center of a vestibuled train, the dining car is a good place to remain. A sixteen-section sleeping car may weigh from 110,000 to 125,000 pounds, while the buffet-library car of the transcontinental type comes next in weight at 107,000 pounds. The baggage car, weighing 85,000 pounds, may be the lightest in a train, but the postal car next to it weighs on an average 103,000 pounds, a reclining chair car is full weight at 87,000 pounds, while the ordinary passenger coach weighs 93,000 pounds. With a locomotive and tender weighing 260,000 pounds, one may estimate, by these figures, the enormous weight of some of the through railway trains of seven cars.

Signs of Carelessness.

She had just returned from a shopping tour, tired and radiant. He had just returned from the office, tired, but—well, tired.

Quivering with delight at the array of samples snipped from rolls of dress goods she emptied the contents of her purse into her lap. There was a metallic sound. A look of dismay crossed her face.

"There!" she exclaimed. "I just knew there was something I had forgotten to buy!"

"What was it, dear," he asked, with an assumption of interest.

"I'm sure I don't know," she replied, petulantly, "but I find I have a half dollar left!"

Pig's Journey on Cowcatcher.

The engineer of a Panhandle passenger train, on arrival at Logansport, Ind., recently, found a curious passenger on the cowcatcher of his locomotive, in the shape of a live pig. He said the animal had probably been trying to find a warm place and had climbed on the cowcatcher at some of the stations along the route. When found the pig was half frozen, but recovered when put in a warm pen.

Extremes Meeting.

"Jack did rather a paradoxical literary feat the other day."

"What was it?"

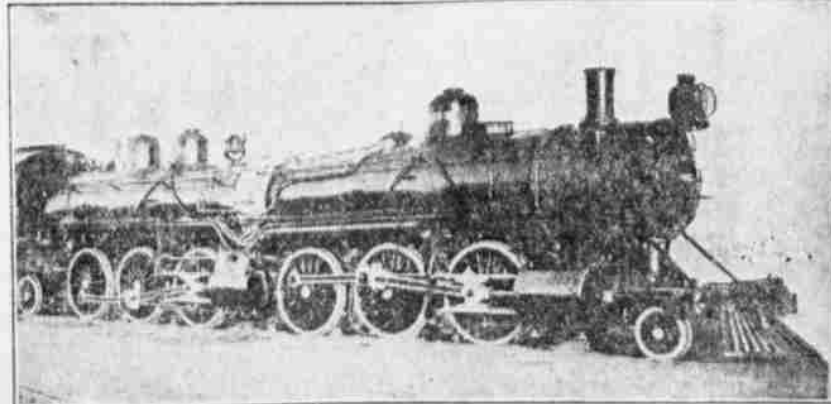
"Landed a sea tale."

Heavy Burden.

"Pa, what is an incubus?"

"Half the time these days, my son, it's an automobile."

FLEXIBLE LOCOMOTIVE



This locomotive has been built by an American railroad company and tested but a few days ago. Its peculiarity consists in the boiler which on account of its length had to be jointed in the middle, to enable it to take all the curves of the road. Conservatively estimated this locomotive with the tender together is about 75 feet long. This is the first and so far the only locomotive of this kind.