

NEW BOOKS

By CHARLES FRANCIS REED

STORIES of Western life are always frankly familiar in their appeal,—telling of men who live on action and thrive in the out-of-doors. One of them, "Bruce of the Circle A,"⁴ by Harold A. Titus, starts as though it might be very conventional, with a "tall, handsome hero," and a beautiful Eastern girl for the other half of the love story. However, this Eastern girl was not in Arizona to teach school; she had come in search of her drunken husband. The plot is cleverly worked out, the love story is refreshing and clean. Of course, there is a fight, a runaway, and a very intelligent horse. However, Mr. Titus has given a freshness to even the familiar point of his narrative, and the story is a romance that holds the reader's attention and respect. The other story, "The Fighting Fool,"⁵ is by Dane Coolidge, who has gained an enviable reputation for his stories of the Western borders of our country. His characterizations are more perfect than those obtained by most writers, probably he knows better than the majority of modern writers the life of the picturesque characters who abound along our frontiers. There is a love story and plenty of atmosphere.

"Oh, Money! Money!"⁶ by Eleanor H. Porter, is somewhat disappointing. It is a nice clean story, filled with clever sayings, but not as convincing as was "Pollyanna" or "David." It tells of a rich man who decides to give a large sum of money to each of his relatives, who do not know him, and see which one is best suited to have the larger inheritance. He sends the checks to these cousins, and then under an assumed name goes to live among them. Maggie Duff, the step-sister of the cousins he tests, is the heroine of the

⁴"Bruce of the Circle A," by Harold A. Titus. Small, Maynard & Co. \$1.35 net.

⁵"The Fighting Fool," by Dane Coolidge. E. P. Dutton Company. \$1.50 net.

⁶"Oh, Money! Money!" by Eleanor H. Porter. The Houghton Mifflin Co. \$1.50 net.

story, and is a likable character. On the whole, "Oh, Money! Money!" is too sweet. It is sure to be highly popular among Mrs. Porter's admirers, but this gifted writer is capable of something more virile.

First novels are always interesting, especially when they come from the pen of a writer who has made himself popular as the author of a magazine. They are not always a great success, however, and in this case Bruce Barton, best known for his writing and editing of "Everyweek," has not yet reached the high fictional note which should be possible from his pen. His novel, "The Making of George Groton,"⁷ is a story of Wall Street, a conventional story of a boy who comes to New York, has the most astounding good luck, and then when he has reached the pinnacle of his desire, decides that money making is not the best game in the world. The book is well written, though several of the characters are not entirely convincing. Mr. Barton will probably continue to write novels, and his second will be worth watching for.

Of two English books, one, "Before the Wind,"⁸ is a war story, while "A Girl Alone,"⁹ by Howel Evans, is a story of a girl who finds herself alone in London, and faces the struggle for existence in a great heartless city. Of the two, "Before the Winds" has the most merit. It is a story remotely connected with the war, for there are no scenes at the front, no tales of carnage. The scene is Scotland, and there is a romance, a detective story, and plenty of excitement that has a humorous touch. The mystery that holds the reader's attention is solved during a Zeppelin raid,—and the romance ended. "A Girl Alone" is rather a sordid narrative, yet the author has been successful in his effort to show that humanity, even in the most miserable circumstances, is ever present. The girl, like a thousand of her fictional sisters, finds herself suddenly penniless and has to wade through misery to reach the last chapter. This is the type of book popular with the penny thrillers of England.

⁷ "The Making of George Groton," by Bruce Barton. Doubleday, Page & Co. \$1.40 net.

⁸ "Before the Wind," by Janet Loring. E. P. Dutton & Co. \$1.50 net.

⁹ "A Girl Alone," by Howell Evans. G. P. Putnam's Sons. \$1.50 net.

"Salt," or "The Education of Griffith Adams"* is a second book by Charles G. Norris. It is a searching analysis of the education of one young man, taking the hero from boyhood through various private schools and a middle western university—continuing his education when, after graduation, Griffith Adams goes to work in a New York office, marries—and gradually over a course of years shapes his professional life.

The new novel is a decidedly interesting piece of work, showing great depiction of character. A number of men may resent the author's comments on college fraternities—and college morals—but as a story of one young man—not typical of college men as a whole, this narrative shows a series of forceful pictures.

Charles G. Norris, if he is able to continue his literary work, should reach the enviable place held by his older brother, the late Frank Norris, whose novels were so strikingly realistic. Mr. Norris is at present serving as a Captain in the U. S. Army, and is incidentally the husband of Kathleen Norris, of popular novel fame.

Algernon Blackwood's books are worth reading for their author's charming use of words—his ability to make a single word or phrase bring so much into life and color before the mental eye of the reader. Not that he depends for his appeal on fine writing alone, for his novels have definite plots—but the sense and value of the parts of the English language are never lacking.

His latest work to be published is called "The Promise of Air"*. It is the story of a commonplace man who has dreams—who finds time to lift himself above the ordinary, and see the beauty about him. Gradually his whole family finds a healing love come over them—a mystic, indefinable state of mind that gives them "the promise of air"—a glimpse into how men will live and love in the future. It is not a heavy book—not an essay with some fictional touches, but rather a romance, a love story, that breathes of the mystic.

* "Salt, or the Education of Griffith Adams," by Charles G. Norris. E. P. Dutton & Co. \$1.50 net.

* "The Promise of Air," by Algernon Blackwood. E. P. Dutton & Co. \$1.50 net.

OF MISCELLANEOUS INTEREST

THREE new volumes of the Modern Library have been recently issued, and their titles are quite in keeping with the excellent selection previously offered in this most interesting collection. Perhaps the most striking is a sheaf of Aubrey Beardsley's drawings* with a preface, and critical sketch, by Arthur Symons. The other two are "Henry Ryecroft"* by George Gissing, and "Bertha Garlan"* by Arthur Schnitzler. If the Modern Library can continue to occasionally offer such material in the neat leather bindings—then it must soon become one of the most popular collections printed in the United States.

Katherine Lee Bates has contributed poems to the FORUM, and some of them will be found in the collection just published under the title "The Retinue."* The majority of the verses included in the new volume are war poems, and are arranged by the author as a record of her thought, starting in 1914 and continuing to the present time. There are also miscellaneous verses. Miss Bates is one of America's clever singers, and this new volume will do much towards her already established reputation.

The verses included in "Hours of France,"* by Paul Scott Mowrer, who is the special war correspondent of the Chicago Daily News, are written with a simple direct note so much cultivated by newspapermen—and so frequently (as in this case) the most successful method of striking the personal intimate note. The poems are of two classes, those which picture France as the author knew it before 1914 and as he has seen it since that fateful August. One bit of prophetic verse, that is not lacking in humor is, "The Folly of Age."

* "The Hours of France," by Paul Scott Mowrer. E. P. Dutton & Co. \$1.00 net.

* "The Art of Aubrey Beardsley," by Arthur Symons. Boni & Liverwright. \$0.60 net.

* "The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft," by George Gissing. Boni & Liverwright. \$0.60 net.

* "Bertha Garlan," by Arthur Schnitzler. Boni & Liverwright. \$0.60 net.

* "The Retinue," by Katherine Lee Bates. E. P. Dutton & Co. \$1.50 net.

Old men with wooden leg or empty sleeve
 Will sit at last, and scold and sigh and fret,
 Talking of trench and shell at Auberive,
 Or mud and rain in Flanders, with regret.

And basking through the peaceful afternoons,
 "The times have sadly dwindled," they will say.
 "The lads who fought at Dixmude and the dunes
 Were not, thank God, like these young men to-day."

The Honorable Socrates Potter, who told the world at large about "Keeping Up with Lizzie," through the medium of Irving Bacheller's pen, is airing his views again, this time on the much more serious subject of "Keeping Up with William,"* and "William" is the German Kaiser.

The book is a humor coated essay on the prapaganda that Germany has at work in the United States, and much of its humor, while laughable, is pointed—so sharply pointed that each reader will be convinced that it is his, or her, duty to aid in the stamping out of the German line of thought that has so degraded the people of the Fatherland. The book is illustrated with cartoons, and the proceeds of its sale will be given to the children of France and Belgium made fatherless by "Williamism."

Mr. Bacheller's new book will probably be much quoted by anti-German talkers, and it deserves the praise it will undoubtedly bring.

"Russia's Agony,"¹⁹ by Robert Wilton, who was correspondent of the London Times at Petrograd, is a carefully detailed account of the revolutionary conditions that he saw while reporting the ever changing political and social status of that country. The book is interesting and enlightening.

* "Keeping Up with William," by Irving Bacheller. Bobbs-Merrill Co. \$1.00 net.

¹⁹ "Russia's Agony," by Robert Wilton. Longmans Green & Co. \$4.80.

IN NANCY

By ELEANOR PRESTON WATKINS

THERE'S a little cleared space in a ruined street
In Nancy, in Nancy,
Where the dust shows the print of small flying feet
In Nancy.

They spin their tops with a fearless hand,
They stand foursquare as their fathers stand;—
For the bravest city in that brave land
Is Nancy.

For a man shall work and a child shall play,
However the cannon thunder;
And a woman shall smile at the end of the day;—
This is the wide world's wonder!

The streets are cleared lest the lines be lost
In Nancy, in Nancy,
And they cherish the art of each wrought-iron post
In Nancy.

They will not hasten, they may not shirk,
For any terror of Hun or Turk.
In the sight of God they do their work
In Nancy.

For a man shall work and a child shall play,
However the cannon thunder;
And a woman shall smile at the end of the day;—
This is the wide world's wonder!

They gather their wounded, they bury their dead,
In Nancy, in Nancy,
But ever they walk with a victor's tread
In Nancy.

No cannon shall blast them from their own sod,
Nor turn them from ways that their fathers' trod.
They know they are held in the hand of God
In Nancy.

For a man shall work and a child shall play,
However the cannon thunder;
And a woman shall smile at the end of the day;—
This is the wide world's wonder!