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## The New Books

(Continued from preceding page)

### Fiction

**THE WAY OF THE WILD.** By HERBERT RAVENEL SASS. Minton, Balch. 1925. \$5.

In a foreword, Mr. Sass defends the nature story. It has interested thousands in "the wild folk." And it is often the truest picture of their lives, which are full of unseen drama that the "careful naturalist's" record cannot picture.

With his second point most of these stories of his own are at odds. They are romantic; three of them are avowedly Cherokee legends. The animals are not metamorphosed humans, but the main drama does not purport to be such as would naturally fill their lives, unseen; man always witnesses some of it, generally occasions it, sometimes participates in it. In one story, a duck hawk ("Cloud King, the peregrine"—Mr. Sass runs to that style) knocks down a loon (an improbable exile in the region) savagely close to a fox on which a hunter is drawing a bead. In another, a hunter's shot cripple an eagle, a fox, and a blue heron, which find themselves starving together on a little island. As romance, this is all right, except artistically, and there is nothing against honest romance in the nature story field.

Mr. Sass writes well, clothing his stories better than he contrives them, out of a rich knowledge of the South Carolina wilderness.

**PENGUIN ISLAND.** By Anatole France. Illustrated by Frank C. Pape. Dodd, Mead. 1925. \$5.

Here is Anatole France's classic in a sumptuous new dress. Mr. Pape has already illustrated "The Queen Pedauke", Cabell's "Jurgens," and "The High Place" and other works. His distinctive, highly decorative, and intensely amusing style is well-known. Beside the full page illustrations, the binding, letterpress and decorations of the book are all very pleasing. This is quite a prize for lovers of special editions.

**THE WORKS OF ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.** South Seas Edition. 32 volumes. Scribners. 1925. 90 cents a volume. Set \$28.80.

This cloth-bound pocket edition of Stevenson is furnished with prefaces by Mrs. R. L. Stevenson and prefatory notes by Lloyd Osbourne to almost every volume. Osbourne's notes draw notable pictures of Tusalala in various creative years. The edition is well-made and simply and attractively bound. It occupies comparatively small shelf-space and is authoritative in every respect. It is an admirable edition for the small library.

**A HOUSE OF POMEGRANATES.** By OSCAR WILDE. Illustrated by Ben Kucher. Dodd, Mead. 1925. \$3.50.

H. L. Mencken writes a preface for this new edition of Oscar Wilde's famous stories, illustrated with charm and delicacy by Ben Kucher. "Here," says Mencken, "we have the authentic Wilde. . . . a rapt and garrulous drunkard of the eye." Wilde sets up, says Mencken, a theory of the world as a purely aesthetic spectacle. And then Mencken goes on to say a great deal more, and, in little over seven pages, produces one of the most penetrating analyses of Wilde that we have read for some time. This preface, and the additional fact that this illustrated edition is most attractively manufactured, should commend it to the affluent reader.

**COLLECTED STORIES AND TALES.** By FRIZ-JAMES O'BRIEN. Edited by Edward J. O'Brien. A. & C. Boni. 1925. \$2.

This new volume in the Boni's excellent American Library, is as justifiable a reissue as that of the four volumes of Bierce brought out some time ago. In the middle of the nineteenth century O'Brien led the New York Bohemians of that day. He was, as William Winter has quoted, "splendid in banquets". He had all the personal charm and dashingness of the fortunate Irish. "The laugh of O'Brien blew care away from the cup of life, as foam is blown from the white caps of the sea."

"His literary life," says our contemporary O'Brien, "was exceedingly irregular and very productive . . . His best is superb, and his worst shockingly bad . . . But the best of his short stories call for no apologies, except our own for neglecting them so long." Well, here are the best: "The Diamond Lens" (a masterpiece of imagination), "The Wondersmith", "The Lost

Room", "The Pot of Tulips", "The Golden Ingots", "What Was It?" and so on. Edward O'Brien thinks that Fitz-James O'Brien forecast "the machine soul" of our day. He possessed or was possessed of a daemon, like Poe, and was preoccupied with the scientific. His best stories are amazing phantasy.

**RUBEN AND IVY SEN.** By LOUISE JORDAN MILN. Stokes. 1925.

Mrs. Miln's novels of problem are entertaining, even when they are most didactic. In "Mr. and Mrs. Sen" the difficulties of an Anglo-Chinese marriage were portrayed; "Ruben and Ivy Sen", something of a sequel to the former tale, shows unflinchingly the traps that heredity lays for the children of such a union. The spirit of Mendel hovers menacingly over Ruben Sen, who is as Chinese in spirit as he is English in appearance, and over his sister Ivy, whose English soul is hidden behind the prettiest of Oriental faces. The progress of the novel centers around the development of these two characters and around the expediency of their marriages, actual or proposed. The tale is never merely sensational. It is an honest novel, for the most part well written. Some readers will find the scenes in China too full of local color, but only a few will remain unimpressed by Mrs. Miln's mastery of the racial conflict she has chosen to portray.

**THE HOUSE OF MENDOZA.** By CONDES NEVE. Dorrance. 1925. \$2.

With the setting in an actual castle in Spain, and with such principal characters as a very rich and generous Spaniard who is at odds with the Church, his very handsome young son who resolves to become a monk in order to expiate the imaginary sins of his father, and a very handsome and plucky American heiress, one could not but expect the author to give his story the color of romance and fervor of melodrama. The first half of the novel runs along at a brisk trot. The father, anxious to keep his son from entering the Church, accepts the accidental meeting with the beautiful American girl as a good omen and seeks in a most subtle manner to act as Cupid between her and his self-flagellating son. Midway, however, the author loses control of the narrative and what follows is rank trash. The heroine permits herself to be kidnapped by a rascally servant, a notorious bandit suddenly begins to act like a Western hero, the young Don succumbs to the temptations of the flesh and recklessly faces death to save the beautiful American, and the scene changes to a most unapproachable pass in the rugged hills of Spain. Wedding bells ring down the curtain.

The triteness of the latter half of the book is somewhat unexpected; for the author has a picturesque flow of language, and his depiction of the life in a Spanish village is vivid and colorful.

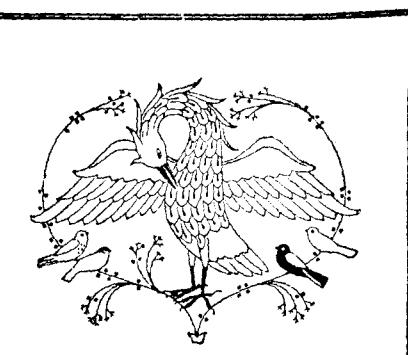
**GRAIG KENNEDY ON THE FARM.**

By ARTHUR B. REEVE. Harpers. 1925. \$2.

Lovers of detective stories—who *ipso facto* follow Craig Kennedy's adventures—may think that there are no mysteries and dangers in rural scenes sufficient to attract his professional attention. Mr. Reeve easily shows that there is much criminal work of a baffling sort done far away from the city streets. From the Canadian border to Long Island Craig travels with the chronicles of his deeds; he unravels mysteries in which every clue points, to the lay mind, in the wrong direction. Occasionally the yarns are not built up to the rattling climax which a first rate detective story should have, but the book will give the reader a satisfying evening in an armchair.

**STAND BY.** By CAROLYN COX. Harpers. 1925.

Here is a romance of the World War and of the period immediately following. Rosemary Lee is a Southern girl who is so indiscreet as to include within a package sent to the sailors her own photograph. As a consequence she becomes acquainted with hard-boiled Jack Harlow, the Devil's Mascot, and marries him on impulse. Later he finds the marriage irksome and ignores her letters. His ship is torpedoed, but he escapes to have more adventures. After the Armistice he becomes a mine sweeper and is permanently injured. Meanwhile Rosemary has fallen in love with another sailor. But when Jack, now a consumptive and hopeless wreck, approaches her she is loyal, and though subsequently he is brutal she never falters. He reforms, saves her from drowning, and dies.



**I**N A city called Maiden's Delight lived a king named Immortal-Power. He had three sons who were supreme blockheads, so he summoned a wise Brahman and said, "Holy Sir, as a favor to me you must make these princes incomparable masters of the art of intelligent living."

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### The Panchatantra

which means "five books" in Sanskrit, has now for the first time been completely translated into English, by Arthur W. Ryder, in a desire to retell these stories as they were first told in India. Here is a collection that rivals the "Arabian Nights" of Haroun al Raschid. \$4

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### Government

**THE MORAL SIDEARDS OF DEMOCRACY.** By HENRY WILKES WRIGHT. Appleton. 1925. \$2.  
Professor Wright opposes some of the inroads that the behaviorists have made into the moral and social sciences. He refuses in particular to accept a version of Man in which that being is denied a consciousness. Without consciousness how can we reason, and without reason, how can we be moral? Professor Wright

