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# Esther Forbes Book Corner

## JUST PARAGRAPHS

A movement seems to be on foot to make of Ring Lardner a devastating realist, and not a humorist as we thought he was at all. As Mr. Simon Strusky points out in the N. Y. Times, the intelligentsia are coming to like the things that appeal to the common man but they have to find different reasons for doing so. Therefore they make Charlie Chaplin not a humorist but a tragedian, and Mr. Lardner who makes millions laugh an expounder of grim realism.

A book, the first to treat Frans Liszt as a romantic hero rather than a musician, has appeared in France and is being published at once in this country. The French edition is reported to have sold more than 100,000 copies, duplicating the success of "Ariel."

## A DISTINGUISHED FIRST NOVEL

### "O GENTEEL LADY"

By Esther Forbes  
Houghton Mifflin Co.

In "O Genteel Lady" Esther Forbes has written more than a first novel. She has written an exceedingly finished work, full of a keen observation and subtle feeling for life.

It is a story of the 1850's and might therefore be one of those books in which the background, instead of knowing its place, takes the center of the stage and shoves its characters into the corners. But it avoids this common error and we have the delight of that older, quainter day without sacrificing the individuality of the people.

Lanice Bardeen leaves Amherst to seek a career in Boston, because Mamma has eloped to Italy with one of the young gentlemen from the college, and Amherst becomes a hotbed of gossip, is intolerable for her daughter. We like Lanice from the moment we see her in the cold little train wobbling its way to Boston. "She looked down and saw the points of her bronze slippers resting side by side upon the dirty floor exactly as a lady's shoes should rest, and smiled a lingering secret smile. Exactly as a lady's shoes should rest. . . . No one would guess that they were empty and that her feet were drawn up under her warm body."

It is this conflict between convention and humanity which makes Lanice human and interesting and modern, yet because of the difference in the conventions, decidedly of the period of the 1850's.

Lanice finds interesting work in Boston with a firm of publishers and discovers that rather than a painter she will be a writer. She has a devastating romance with dashing Captain Anthony Jones; she goes abroad at Mamma's death and meets the young student who is dying in Italy, tries to see Jones again and fails, does some excellent writing, and returns. In Italy Miss Forbes catches the very spirit of that somehow enervating sunlight, and in the youth who is dying but content to die because he has loved life so well, she sums up that civilization which is wistful yet fulfilled.

The entire book is marked by this fine perception which makes it unnecessary to say that we hope for good things from Miss Forbes in the future since she has already attained.

## MR. TOPPER IS EDUCATED

### "TOPPER"

By Thorne Smith  
Robert M. McBride

"Topper" satisfies a secret longing within us. A longing deeper than that one for absolute silliness which is very deep and for which Thorne Smith seems to have a genuine, the

longing to prove to others that we know just a little more about the enjoyment of living than they do. It is a secret vanity which is not satisfied, however, until the others know just enough of our joys to be made envious. So when Topper, whose highest joys have been concerned with a leg of lamb and a suburban game of bridge, is converted to the more zestful joys of freedom and youth and motoring, yet with the reservation that he remains an outsider, he acts as proxy for his class and satisfies this longing.

Topper has an unusual introduction into these higher joys, by the spirits of George and Marian Kerby who having loved them not too wisely but too well, had while motoring an unfortunate occurrence with a tree. But when Topper bought their car and motored past their tree, they found no difficulty in joining him, though in an ethereal state. This leads to endless complications. The car goes romping through villages, Mr. Topper sitting beside the driver's seat which is empty, which incident leaves the inhabitants in a state of coma, or the passerby see Mr. Topper sitting beside the road talking evidently to space while the punctured tire rolls around and hops up on the rack and the spare obligingly and without assistance takes its place.

In Mr. Topper Mr. Smith has created a character, appealing because he is human and pitiful and ridiculous who is worthy of extended life.

## The QUEERNESS OF CELIA

By AMELIE RIVES  
(Princess Troubetzkoy)

A distinctly individual story. Tells of a penniless orphan who becomes the ward of a rich New Yorker and enters the world of theatres, music and society.

Publication: May 6 Net \$2.00  
FREDERICK A. STOKES, N. Y.

## O GENTEEL LADY

By ESTHER FORBES

The Boston Herald calls this superb novel of the 1850's "one of the joys of the year"  
Houghton Mifflin Co. \$2.00

In its 24th edition the day after publication

## PIG IRON

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new novel—\$2.00  
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## ONE OF FARNOL'S BEST NOVELS

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## BRIEF NEWS ITEMS FROM LAKE COUNTY

### NEIGHBORHOOD JOTTINGS

#### Interesting Happenings About This Part of North Shore and Vicinity; County Seat Doings

Death coming after two years of illness, closed the life of W. P. Higley, veteran merchant of Waukegan, and long an outstanding figure in the life of the community, at 4:30 o'clock Wednesday afternoon of last week. The deceased was 82 years of age.

Work was started last week on the construction of a \$100,000 addition to the Holy Child high school on North Sheridan road, Waukegan, by the Annoe construction company, 500 North Dearborn street, Chicago.

Independent residents of Zion are taking more than a passive interest in the action of the Zion council in defying the order of the Illinois Commerce Commission with regard to stops being made in Zion by the North Shore busses.

O. E. Churchill, a resident of Libertyville for more than 35 years died last week at the home of his son, Dr. A. H. Churchill, in Oswego, Ill., where he was visiting. The deceased was 79 years of age.

Members of the retail division of the Chamber of Commerce in meeting in Waukegan voted to close all stores in the city on Monday, May 31 in honor of the observance of Memorial Day which falls on Sunday, May 30.

Search of all roads in the county made last week by Postmaster Mancell Talcott and several United States postal department detectives for trace of rifled mail sacks stolen from truck on the Northwestern station platform failed to disclose any clues.

The plan of John G. Gamber, state fire marshal, to conduct a probe of fire hazards in Waukegan, has been broadened in scope to include a number of other cities and towns in Lake county, according to Paul E. Bertram, deputy state fire marshal, who paid this county a flying visit last week.

That at least two more units, which will triple the capacity of the United States Veterans hospital at North Chicago over its present size, will be added within the near future, is declared by those interested in the affairs of the institution.

Reports that Elmer J. Green, former sheriff of Lake county would be appointed to succeed John L. Whitman as warden of Joliet penitentiary, have been current ever since Mr. Green was relieved as warden of the state hospital at Chester. In a reported interview at his home in Kankakee, Governor Len Small is quoted as saying that no such appointment has been made.

Well by not being in the League of Nations this month we certainly missed a fine fight.

The Bolsheviks have increased the military item in their budget nearly a hundred million for this year. Evidently the communists are in favor of pacifism only outside of Russia.

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## SERVICE OF LIVESTOCK TO BE SHOWN IN EXHIBIT

Grouped about a central feature portraying the wide range of services which livestock render to mankind, an exhibit now being prepared by the Bureau of Animal Industry, United States Department of Agriculture, is approaching completion. The display is 72 feet long and will be shown at the National Sesquicentennial Exposition in Philadelphia beginning June 1.

The central theme of the exhibit is brought out by the use of models and paintings illustrating the production of animal products. In the foregoing and flanking the principal scene appear scores of products derived from animals. These commodities include not only meats but useful articles obtained from hides, wool, mohair, bone, feathers, viscera, horns, and glands. There are also displays illustrating the quarantine service, tuberculosis eradication, and other veterinary work.

An engrossed book on display carries text as follows:  
"From fields, mountainsides, and wastelands our domestic livestock garner forage and give it new useful

forms.  
"Under the magic of animal life, grass and coarse feed become meat, milk, wool, and leather. Meanwhile, humbly picking up seeds and insects from here and yon, busy domestic fowls supply still other food products; finally the soft plumage of these creatures gives added relaxation to man's rest and sleep.  
"The horse and dog—for centuries faithful comrades—perform countless useful duties and add zest to recreation."

## TELLS BEST ROUTE TO INDIANAPOLIS

Motorists driving to the races at Indianapolis Memorial day are advised by the touring bureau of the Chicago Motor club to take Illinois state highway No. 10 through Danville to the state line; Indiana state highway No. 33 to Lebanon, and Indiana No. 6 to Indianapolis.

168 of the 226 miles of this route are paved roads, the remainder being good gravel.

A street at Versailles, France, has been renamed Rockefeller street. Doubtless they will keep it well oiled.

## NEW OFFICERS OF GUILD INSTALLED

New officers installed at the meeting of the Young Women's guild of the Glencoe Union church held last week are as follows: Mrs. R. W. Keller, president; Mrs. Ralph E. Stoetzel, first vice-president; Mrs. Harold J. Lynn, second vice-president; Mrs. F. M. deBeers, recording secretary; Mrs. C. R. Ringson, corresponding secretary; Mrs. Henry W. Fay, treasurer. Committee chairmen are as follows: Mrs. Howard I. Patten, social work; Mrs. Austin L. Wyman, program; Mrs. A. C. Goodnow, membership; Mrs. B. M. Kohler, house; Miss Ruth L. Goss, finance; Mrs. O. B. Parr, fellowship; Mrs. Francis L. Woolley, dramatic; Mrs. H. C. Rouse, decoration; Mrs. Henry P. Pope, good cheer; Mrs. A. W. Fischer, dinner.

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