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# NEWEST BOOKS AND BOOK REVIEWS

### Just Paragraphs

The Nobel Prize has been awarded for the second time in its twenty-five years of history to a woman. Grazia Deledda, an Italian writer is the winner of the coveted honor, her chief work being "The Mother," a story of a remote and primitive village of peasants and shepherds, the kind of village in which she herself was born and spent her early life.

Another Englishman has crossed the pond to look us over and then to write a book about us. He is Douglas Goldring and though his publishers all but promise that he won't mention Niagara Falls they did not dare do so much for prohibition.

Mr. Van Loon First

"AMERICA"

By Hendrik Van Loon Boni & Liveright

When you pick up a large lusty fullgrown book like this of Hendrik Van Loon's on "America" you feel a more than usual keen desire to know just what it is like. It is all very well to take on puny companions unthoughtfully-they can be laid aside readily enough in an hour. But it is quite another matter to find oneself entering into conversation with a great lusty being who could with a lift of the hand tip us over and who might choose to do so. Much has been said about taking books as companions but little, so far as we know, about the danger of taking up with these great husky volumes which may intimidate by sheer physical bulk.

One look at the illustrations, of which there are a profuse number,

> A PRIZE NOVEL "Rebellion"

By Mateel Howe Farnham. Dodd Mead & Co.

the publishers try to make you feel average for the nation is \$6,400. that because Mateel Howe Farnham got ten thousand dollars-or was it more?-in good hard cash for her novel, "Rebellion", it is therefore a "great" novel. It is a simple method by which they so thoroughly advertise the giving away of this large amount of money that the public hastens eagerly to give it back to them.

But "Rebellion" is certainly not a great novel. It just, in my opinion, squeaks under the wire of being a mediumly good one. Perhaps it is a good one for serialization, perhaps, the movies will like it, but those other two factors having to be considered, the novel-reading public has come out the small end.

and we know that our companion has a humorous glint in his eye, in fact often he laughs, though not as abandonedly as we might fear he would do. He has a sense of color, too, and a feeling for the dramatic. The latter does little to insure our safety, of course, as we may be to him a dramatic incident ourselves. But on reading the first page we became reassured he has no other fish to fry.

He-the volume-under the guidance of Mr. Van Loon, is telling the story of America, the country about which we seem to have heard so much but know so little. It seems that back in the days of Columbus there was a shortage in the market of spices because of the old trade routes to India being cut off. The situation was so acute there was much talk of finding a new route through which to bring the necessary goods. Columbus being a man of vision, started off to find the route. Years later when the new country had been discovered but no one knew what to do about it, it was the popularity of the tobacco plant which attraced settlers to it in spite of the terrible hardships to be endured. So it becomes apparent that Mr. Van Loon is a follower of that hardhearted doctrine known as "economic determinism." It also becomes apparent that Mr. Van Loon is well informed, but looks at things from a new and original angle, that he is satirical, that he likes to play the buffoon. We are treated to his opinions on many subjects, including often royalty, and we can assure you that they—the opinions—are never dull.

On the whole this history or story -did the word history come from "his story"-is a lively document from which much amusement and knowledge can certainly be gained.

In a nation-wide competition for scheduled speed of electric railways, two lines operating in Illinois took first and second place, respectively.

The governor of Illinois receives \$12,-000 per year, the second highest sal-"The great prize novel" is the way | ary received by state governors. The

# tor BOOKS

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#### Jean Untermeyer Scores With Volume of Poems

Jean Starr Untermeyer has just issued a new collection of poems, "Steep Ascent," published by the Mac-Millan company. She is the author of "Dreams out of Darkness," and "Growing Pains."

Most of Mrs. Untermeyer's poems in "Steep Ascent" hold the desire of rising out of the chaos and troubled burden of life to peace and faith. The first poem, "One Kind of Humility," gives the keynote:

"Shall we say heaven is not heaven Since golden stairs are rugged and uneven?

Or that no light illuminates a star That swings in other regions than we are?

Deny with soured breath enduring God

Because we cling so rankly to the sod?

No. Cleanse with weeping, feasting and with prayer,

Praise God. Look forward. Mount the stair!"

All her poems are written with the utmost simplicity, yet she achieves distinctive effects and displays a genuine poetical imagination. Her rhythm is not always technically perfect, but she does express clearly what she wishes to get across. There are some lovely descriptive poems, and others self-, revelatory, such as:

They Say-"They say I have a constant Heart, who know

Not anything of how it turns and yields

First here, first there; nor how in separate fields

It runs to reap and then remains to sow.

How, with quick worship, it will bend and glow

Before a line of song, an antique vase,

Evening at sea; or in a well-loved face Seek and find all that Beauty can

bestow.

Yet they do well who name it with a name,

For all its rash surrenders call it

Though many lamps be lit, yet flame is flame; The sun can show the way, a can-

dle, too. The tribute to each fragment is

the same Service to all of Beauty-and her

due."

-Jane Arnt

The Illinois State Journal, Springfield, now in its 97th year, is the oldest newspaper in Illinois.

> A treat for children and adults! Another Hugh Lofting

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COUNT LUCKNER

THE SEADEVIL

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Doubleday, Page & Co.