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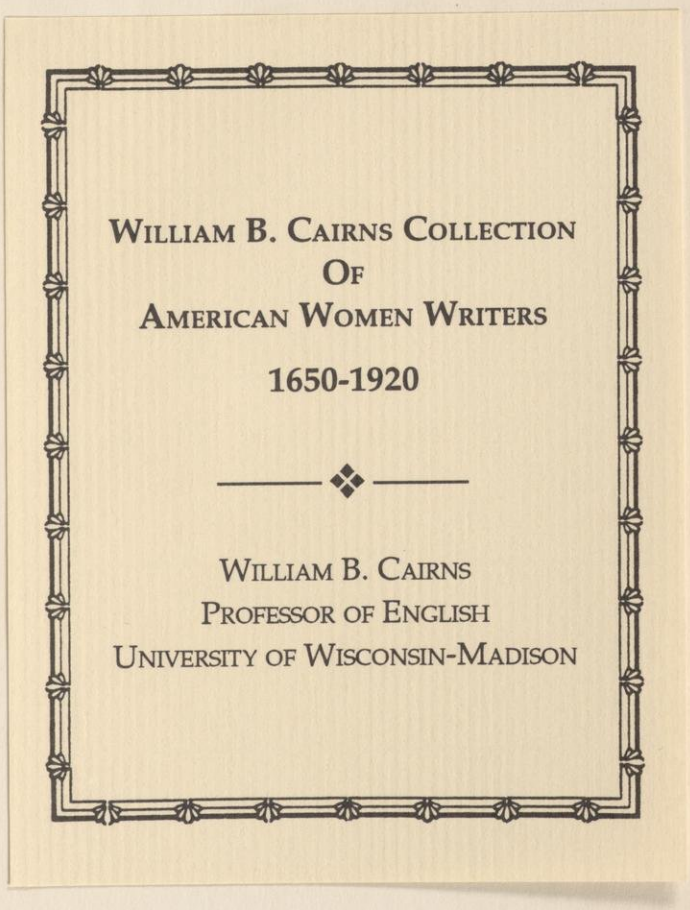
WILLIAM B. CAIRNS COLLECTION
OF
AMERICAN WOMEN WRITERS
1650-1920
WILLIAM B. CAIRNS
PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

THE SO-CALLED SCHOOL OF WISCONSIN AUTHORS

BY

ZONA GALE.

Thesis

PRESENTED FOR THE DEGREE

OF

BACHELOR OF LETTERS

IN THE

MODERN CLASSICAL COURSE.

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN.

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B I B L I O G R A P H Y.

CAPT. CHARLES KING.

"The Colonel's Daughter," "Dunraven Ranch," "The Deserter," "A War Time Wooing," "Laramie;" "The Queen of Bedlam," "Two Soldiers,"

PROF. ANDERSON.

"Synnöve Solbakken," "Magnhild," "The Fisher Maiden" "The Bridal March," "Arne."

AUBERTINE WOODWARD MOORE.

"Echoes from Mistland," "The Norway Music Album."

MARION V. DUDLEY.

"Poems."

ELLA WHEELER WILCOX.

"Maurine and Other Poems," "Mal Moulde," "Poems of Passion," "Perdita and Other Stories," "An Erring Woman's Love and other Poems."

HATTIE TYNG GRISWOLD.

"Home Life of Great Authors," "Lucile and her

Friends," "Waiting on Destiny," "Apple Blossoms,"

CAPT. C. A. CURTIS.

"Two.Bits," "Captured by the Navajoes," "Therese,"

REUBEN GOLD THWAITES.

"Historic Water-Ways," "The Colonies," "Village Life in Old England."

BILL NYE.

"Sketches."

ELLA A. GILES.

"Maiden Rachael," "Out from the Shadows," "Bachelor Ben," "Flowers of the Spirit."

MARION MANVILLE.

"Over the Divide and Other Verses."

CHARLES NOBLE GREGORY.

"Poems."

JULIA & MEDORA CLARK.

"Driftwood."

CHARLOTTA PERRY.

"Poems."

EBEN REXFORD.

"Lover and Brother."

JOHN GOADY GREGORY.

"A Beauty of Thebes and Other Verses."

FLORENCE CAMPBELL.REID.

"Jack's Afire," "Survival of the Fittest."

KENT KENNAN.

Sketches.

MYRON E. BAKER.

"Vacation Thoughts."

JULIA TLASCHER.

"Arbutus and Dandelions."

HAMLIN.GARLAND.

"Ol' Pap's Flaxen," "Prairie Folks," "Jason Edwards."

A painting may be looked at in two ways and may be criticized for its subject, which may, or may not be an artistic one, for the instant of time chosen for representation, for the dress and poise and expression of the figures considered with reference to the circumstances and compared with the characters represented, if they be from life; or it may be criticized with regard to its technique alone; the coloring, the light and shade, the distances, the accuracy of representation; considering not the artist's idea but the skill with which he has communicated it.

In the same way, only with greater freedom because the time limitation is removed, may a book be judged, with reference either to the subject matter, the plot, its management, the developement of character, the dramatic use of every incident and the purpose of the book, if it have one; or with reference to its technique alone; that is considered purely

as a work of art, its language, both in itself and with reference to the subject matter, its sentences, paragraphs and chapters and their arrangement, and its punctuation; not judging the worth of the author's idea, but his skill in communicating it.

A book may be admirable in theme, character conception and management of plot, and yet be hopelessly imperfect rhetorically. It has then lost half its effectiveness, since it is constantly offending, and wasting the interpretating power of the reader in comprehending and reconciling details which should attract no degree of attention to themselves, and should serve only to aid the interpreting power. It is as if, looking at a cathedral, one were constantly attracted by an incongruously painted spire, an unsymetrically placed window, a tower out of all proportion or a minor flaw in the architecture, when one wished to admire the grandeur of the architect's conception and gain a right conception of the meaning of the whole.

Half the pictures refused by the Salon every year show a true poetic interpretation of the subjects, and subjects worthy to be chosen, but the faults lie in the technique. So this has come to be a law: no matter how inartistic the subject of a picture be, or how faulty the conception of it, if the idea

conceived ~~is~~ he faithfully and accurately communicated the picture cannot fail.

This is true in all the arts. If Sigfreid's reverie be interpreted as a sunrise and so rendered upon a musical instrument, it is more effective than his forest walk imperfectly executed. A statue of Pan, exquisitely chiselled, is worth any number of imperfect marbles of Apollo. Art can always dignify its subject and make it worthy of admiration, and without true art in all execution the most artistic and poetic subjects are degraded and underestimated.

The books of the fifteen Wisconsin writers of poetry and fiction are to be treated mainly from a rhetorical standpoint, and judged principally, not as ideas expressed, but as the expression of ideas; considered as works of art and so criticized especially with reference to their technique.

Col. Charles King.

A judgment passed on one of "Capt." King's books would be generally valid for all, since the plots and characters are so nearly alike. The similarity of plots is possibly inevitable in stories of garrison life.

His general manner of telling a story is engaging; there

is a frankness and directness which is pleasing and this is increased by the simplicity of his language; he never errs by preferring words of Latin origin. On the other hand there is absolutely no word-painting, and no subject matter need preclude that. In his numerous descriptions of spirited action there is no attempt at choice of brief, suggestive words, no isolating of subordinate prepositions in short, separate sentences; liquids and the hard, harsh sounds are used indiscriminately in describing misery or a sunset.

The sentences are not very carefully constructed; the arrangement of subordinate clauses is not good always; there is a tendency to write infinitive clauses as subordinate propositions. "She merely wanted that Capt. Forrest should come at once." The sentences frequently end in prepositions and another source of error is in what is technically known as fusion; as, "Why this occurred it is not the province of the narrator to defend," resulting from a confusion of two mental processes: "This occurrance it is not the province of the narrator to defend," and, "Why this occurred it is not the province of the narrator to state." The author's personality is seldom obtruded as it is in the sentence quoted. The greatest fault in his sentences is in his constant use of the inverted order where the occasion in no wise warrants it. In description the

predicate invariably precedes the subject sometimes through several paragraphs, so that when the inverted order might be ~~used quite~~ effectively it is not because of the frequency with which it occurs.

The paragraphing on the whole is good, most of the paragraphs having unity and with few exceptions the opening sentence stating or suggesting the subject.

Capt. King's strongest point is his conversations; these are natural and when colloquialisms are used it is not overdone.

His chief errors are in his diction and may be roughly classified:

1. Carelessness in the choice of adjectives. For instance in "Laramie" occurs: "The darkness grew black and impenetrable;" "the gathering light of dawn" is another expression; "the river rolls along in a silvery, misty gleam." "A rich, rare. lustrous black silk". A clever use of adjectives is often made too; an Indian war-dance is called an "aboriginal ballet."

2. Use of inappropriate words. A bit of narrative or description is sometimes spoiled by the use of a word out of keeping with the rest; as, "the kind hearted post-commander lugged forth a demijohn;" and in the description of a twilight

scene the silence is attributed to the cessation of the "unearthly yelping" of the cayotes.

3. The grouping of synonyms where one term would be sufficient; "Not a sound of mirth, music or laughter;" "she swooned or fainted;" "it was no egotism or conceit that prompted him to the belief."

This fault is always significant of loose thinking even when it is less glaring than in these examples. Especially in the expression of commonplace thoughts, the English language is not so poor that it will not afford some one word full of the significance which three or four, less carefully chosen, only take from the idea. In bits of delicate description there are sometimes two or three"side lights" to be thrown upon the ~~theu~~ thought, and these terms counted synonyms, if chosen with infinite care, are effective.

4. He has a decided penchant for French terms and for semi-poetical words in commonplace description: "gentle-girl," "maiden", "robe", "ere", "morn".

5. A superfluity of exclamations over unimportant matters occurs in the author's interludes: "Heavens! What billing and cooing!"

6. There are other faults not so common in writers, more common in careless speakers; the use of "as though", "as

far as," "to send a note through Jennie", "to give each man greeting in response to a clasp of their hands," "bid" used as past tense of "to bid", and "It was driving McLean well nigh desperate." Now and then there is an uncertainty with regard to the antecedant of a pronoun. There is a constant use of 'twill and 'tis in conversation and interlude. Sometimes an adjective is transferred from the noun which it should qualify to the object of its modifying preposition: "Out in the kitchen he could faintly hear the voices of the domestics and the sound of crockery and glass in the process of cleaning; above stairs the murmur of softer tongues."

He seldom coins a new word, "womanfully" being an instance however of such an attempt.

It is a question whether or not the present tense is ever more effective than the past in narration; but there can be no doubt that the use of both present and past in one book is to be condemned, when there is no judgment used in changing. In "The Colonel's Daughter," the tense changes are very abrupt and unreasonable, both past and present occurring sometimes in one paragraph.

The punctuation is too frequent, especially the commas which are inserted where there are only rhetorical pauses.

There is no evidence of study of style or language in

Capt. King's books; there is no attempt at realism or character delineation.

His books belong to the school in which the characters are used for the developement of the plot, not the plot for the growth of the characters.

Prof. R. B. Anderson.

There is some difficulty in judging an author by his translations in which the English often suffers that the idiom of the other language may be preserved. However although roughness and inelegancy may be tolerated sometimes, rhetorical or grammatical errors are inexcusable.

In Prof. Anderson's translations from the Norse of Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson the most striking characteristic is the directness, almost the abruptness, of the style. Bjørnson's reviewers speak of the conciseness, the terseness of his work which in the English rendering is with difficulty reconciled with the delicate touches, the exquisite realism for which the Norse writer is celebrated,

The matter-of-fact style amounts to a mannerism in English and is one not wholly pleasant since it appears not only in commonplace descriptions or narrations but at moments when the

most carefully chosen words are necessary to preserve the harmony of the idea with its expression.

This abruptness is due sometimes to the omission of the pronoun: "They had kept up such a clatter that a thrush in an ash hard by had never got to sleep at the right time, had become furiously angry ~~at~~ sometimes and had made a fuss." "She inadvertently made a noise, grew alarmed, hurried out of the passage, seized her shoes, hastened away past the houses, across the fields and over to the gate."

The sentence following this illustrates a looseness in construction which sometimes occurs, a vagueness as to the antecedent of the pronoun: "Here she paused, put them on, began to go up the path and made haste." them referring to "shoes" in the preceding sentence, between which and the pronoun three nouns intervene; "Scarcely was the mother out of the house before she began to consider", etc., she referring to a character mentioned half a page before and not to "mother". Another cause of the abruptness of style is his constant use of "the former,""the latter," instead of repeating the noun or pronoun; also the omission of the conjunction, connective or disjunctive, and the constant use of the inverted order in such expressions as "said he," "repeated he," "asked he", "murmured he."

There are numerous little phrases which ff not incorrect are inelegant: "the farther away it got," "neither could raise an eye," "he gave her a kiss," "the blows fell rather oftener."

And not a few grammatical errors occur: "as though," "as far as," "she was most ashamed," "two people stood by the wall," three vehicles one after the other." Several tautological expressions are noticeable: "to mingle together," "to cross over," "tumbling over," "continued onward," "far down into the valley below."

His use of figures of speech is very poor; because some of the sentences are long, although they are not involved, there is a frequency of mixed metaphors which is very amusing, some of which are utterly inexcusable, producing no imagery whatever.

Aubier Forestier.

One may judge the works of Aubier Forestier (Aubertine Woodward Moore) by her "Echoes from Mistland" which is perhaps representative; but from its subject matter and her endeavor to adopt the expression to it her style cannot be criticized by the usual standard.

Her stories are not translations from the Norse but they are rather the stories in substance told in English, and pre-

serving so far as possible the Norse idioms and idiosyncrasies of diction, so that any peculiarities of expression may easily be referred to that except in a few cases where such combinations as "in especial", "presented an imposing effect," occur.

"Echoes from Mistland" is the story of the Niebelungen Lied and is very delightful and entertaining as she has presented it.

Her children's stories are particularly successful and her translations of Norse poems and songs are very graceful and sympathetic; and even to one unfamiliar with the Norse it is evident that the flavor of the original is preserved.

Marion V. Dudley.

Generalities are dangerous and they have proved especially so in the poems of Marion V. Dudley for she has taken such secure refuge in them that very often her meaning is lost. This is true of many single stanzas but never of a whole poem, and so with an idea of the whole one may work out the meaning of some of the stanzas, and by putting oneself in her attitude of mind as nearly as possible, may approximately follow the train of thought which gave rise to the extraordinary meta-

phors and personifications in which her poems abound.

Her figures of speech arise from a distinctly anthropomorphic state of mind; to give a blush feet and sandals, to create a star and dew-drop with cheeks, and to present the Earth with arms in which Summers nestle and sing themselves to death is to give rise to an involuntary imagery which is peculiar.

Mrs. Dudley has unquestionable facility of expression and this becomes her worst fault, for she insists on expressing tirelessly when there is little to express, for one quatrain in most cases would say all that is contained in six or eight stanzas; "the Old,""the New," "the great Everywhere", are not terms in which to define a thought however poetical it may be when it is born.

To The dreaminess, the extreme fancifulness, this far-away view of things, ~~must be things to which a~~ poetically appreciative mind will give significance at once and will realize its degree of importance in poems treating of abstractions, but there must be something else in the true poet which Mrs. Dudley lacks; an understanding of the infinite responsibility which he assumes when he looks at his work as an art and regards it seriously as a duty; not as the mere sensuous pleasure of allowing the words to come, liquid, alliterative, fan-

ciful,-just joy in the simple pleasure of creating; as Mrs. Dudley does. There is not the seriousness in her work which the world has the right to expect; neither is there conscious perfecting of her work by comparison and disinterested scrutiny.

There is too much of the purely lyric in her poems in this sense; that many of them impress one irresistibly as suggesting personal experience; and with such a significance she did not judge them impartially as another is compelled to do, not able to read between the lines. The personal element is permissable of course if it be significant in itself aside from all association. "A June Memory" and "Spiritual Telegraphy" are the most noticable of this class, and have little significance in themselves.

Her poems lack climax. This is frequent so far as thought is concerned and very often a fault in diction or ~~matter~~ meter occurs in the last stanza or verse, which leaves a disagreeable flavor. For example, the last stanza of "A Floating Reverie:"

"Shoreward I turn with reluctant oar,
Saddened, but aad with joy,
Joy for the beauty that brought me tears,
Tears devoid of annoy."

And the last stanza of "True Alchemy:"

"Your face is not fairer, your robe not so rare;
Your hand is not jewelled like mine;
What is the sweet alchemy, pray you declare,
Gives dullness to me and to you the divine?"

The fault in diction in the first illustration, the error in meter in the second make it difficult to conceive a less artistic ending.

There are many pretty fancies, many peculiarly appropriate phrases, especially adjectives, and a musical choice of words very frequently; some of the imagery is charming and there are a few really good poems though they are seldom strong.

The school to which Mrs. Dudley belongs is one rapidly losing ground and is also one of the easiest of which to become a follower.

Ella Wheeler Wilcox.

Ella Wheeler Wilcox is one of the few Wisconsin authors who have attained a national reputation. She has done this through her poetry which is infinitely superior to her prose.

In the collection of poems called "Shells", which was the earliest made, in "Maurine and other Poems", in "Poems of Passion," together with much that it almost worthless there are

a few really beautiful verses; and in "An Erring Woman's Love and Other Poems" there are some which are especially strong.

The fault of the poems as a whole lies in form; in inaccuracy of expression, in imperfect meter, in bad rhymes and in a daring use of words so consciously used out of their usual significance or in astonishing connection as to call undue attention to themselves.

There is an extravagance of expression frequently which is excusable in a very young writer or a writer with peculiar models but from such a phrase as occurs in "Maurine" "He drew his fine shape up and trod the land with kingly grace," one would hardly conclude that what he really did was to walk from the porch to the gate.

Considering for a moment the idea, the subject matter of her poems, there is almost always an expression of some great truth, a subject worthy to be chosen. There is directness of statement in her poems which impresses one and the unpoetical "I hold" occurs frequently. Yet in spite of the obtrusions of the author's personality which are thus so frequent, one must feel that the poems are not wholly lyric, at least not stamped with an individuality of feeling; and that a sentiment especially precious to humanity because it is one which humanity wishes to believe or has been compelled to believe by its ex-

perience, has been voiced for the sake of its appeal. In other words, one of her peculiarities is a frequent expression of a confessedly true and universally acknowledged sentiment, rather than the touches, the subtle allusions, comparisons, suggestions which mark and perfect the poetry of another school

Her prose is not good. Though the poem "Maurine" is inartistic it has yet much to commend it and years after it was published came "Perdita and Other Stories" in prose, which are extremely faulty in diction and construction and almost worthless as to subject matter. It is a collection of love stories, over-drawn, untrue to life, either consisting of nothing but the story told for the story's sake merely to interest and excite, or else having a conscious moral, which is almost as bad.

"Mål Moulée" has been severely criticized for the story itself, for the creation of the character of Dolores. This has nothing to do with the book as a work of art and as such it is well done so far as developement of plot and character are concerned; but the rhetoric is not good, the diction is careless, there are the same daring expressions, the same use of words in unusual relations;"and her tears dripped anew" she says of Helena in a would-be pathetic passage, with the same peculiar choice of words arising either from crudity of thought

or conscious eccentricity of expression.

Ella Wheeler Wilcox with much undoubted talent has dwarfed her powers by the direction in which she has chosen to use them; her choice of subjects comes, one cannot doubt, from a desire to be different from other writers of verse. In those poems in which she does not treat of love she is at her best, almost always graceful in fancy, and sometimes even powerful in thought.

Hattie Tyng Griswold.

Hattie Tyng Griswold has written more prose than poetry and it is her prose which is stamped with her individuality, and so by her stories we may judge her style.

"Waiting on Destiny" is not a novel with a distinct purpose nor with a moral. What lesson it does carry is a negative one and is suggested by the title; it is a story for girls, a love story with very little originality in plot or conception of characters, and though the heroine certainly shows developement of character, she is so overdrawn as a child that she is unnatural. The other characters are well conceived.

"Lucile and her Friends" is a little story for girls, a

home story with interest well sustained and even an attempt at character sketching, but it is charcoal sketching,—only words of description,—instead of an etching in which the perfections of representation are revealed little by little. There is a certain formality of style which grows probably from the conscious effort to adapt the form to the subject-matter and make a story for girls.

"Home Lives of Great Authors" is not wholly successful, The "home" lives in some cases, as those of Goethe and Burns seem to consist principally of a series of love affairs, although in many cases there is a ~~good~~ great deal of interesting information.

What is unpardonable in the book is its endless moralizing. From every mistake of the Great Author under consideration she "points a moral," proceeding to generalize and suggest an advisable course for the rest of mankind. This is not art at all and is inexpressibly wearisome.

There is little evidence of carelessness in the construction of sentence or paragraph so that errors which occur cannot be atrributed to lack of revision; rather the faults in diction are in a certain stiffness arising from great care in the choice of expression without proper judgment in phrasing,

arrangement of clauses and length of sentences.

Little attention is given to paragraphing, three occurring sometimes when there is not sufficient break in thought to warrant one new one.

A series of short sentences occurs frequently which could be arranged to better advantage in subordinate propositions.

Capt. C. A. Curtis.

"Therese"and "Daptured by the Navajoes" are perhaps representative of Capt. Curtis' work. The latter, which appeared first in "Harper's Young People," is a boy's story of adventure; it is bright and interesting and well told with the directness, almost the bluntness, which characterizes the author's style and which is particularly appropriate in relating war-time stories, since when told in the first person it gives one irresistably the idea that the story is a recital of personal experiences. This is especially true of "Tiro-Bits" one of his most charming short stories.

"Therese" is a pretty little romance in which the interest is well sustained and the simple plot skillfully managed. His manner of relating an encounter with Indians is particularly good.

There is no attempt in his works at effects produced by choice of words, no attempt at word painting in any form, or character delineation either boldly or by delicate almost imperceptible touches,—none of the arts used in successful story telling such as gradual approach or half allegorical effects. This may be due to the fact that there is almost no imagination displayed in his stories; they are simple recitals of events and the attractiveness of his books depends upon the subject matter almost wholly.

Reuben Gold Thwaites.

Besides his histories, Mr. Thwaites' books are mostly entertaining descriptions of his own expeditions, especially about Wisconsin.

"Historic Waterways" is an account of a canoe-trip in Wisconsin, partly a recital and partly in epistolary form.

The incidents are well told and the book is bright and interesting.

The epistolary form is one of the most difficult to present attractively and in doing this Mr. Thwaites has succeeded admirably.

He has a pleasing style, and the diction is simple and

free from rhetorical errors; but there is sometimes an expression or phrase which offends a little because of its imagery.

There is nothing particularly new in what he relates, so far as mere incidents are concerned, the "adventures" being such as canveists have the world over; farm houses are described and their peculiar inmates, barking dogs and ungrammatical daughters; but the charm is in the personality of the author revealed in the impressions which he humorously records.

Bill Nye.

Bill Nye is a Wisconsin author who has acheived a national reputation, not for excellence of literature and style, but because of his humor.

His work consists largely in contributions to humorous publications, short stories in which his exploits and impressions are wittily recorded.

He belongs to the "school" of which Mark Twain is a member; ~~but Bill Nye's~~ Mark Twain's humor is more spicy and interesting because it is more varied and more spontaneous.

One is conscious that writing is ~~his~~ Bill Nye's "business" as is likely to be the case with humorists; and one frequently forgets that there is an art back of an expression which seems so

"hap-hazard" in its form. "It takes a wise man to be a fool" and the humorous effects in his writings are due largely to the adopting of certain methods of which he always makes use: absurdly ungrammatical speech, and ridiculous spelling. "Bill Nye's philosophy" is embodied in a series of well put truths showing discrimination and analysis in his observation of men, and of platitudes and axioms pithily put or given new settings.

Hs has published several books, his "History of the United States" being among the best known.

Ella A. Giles.

Ella A. Giles' prose works belong to an old school, and are not fair examples of her work since much of her later writings, especially her short stories and rondeaux, are very good.

"Maiden Rachel" may be taken as a fair representation of her books, it being considered the best of her three novels, none of which is so good as her short stories. "Bachelor Ben" and "Out from the Shadows" are the other two novels.

As a whole "Maiden Rachael" is extremely inartistic; it sermonizes. The characters are continually brought together for a pleasant evening or a long drive and the occasion taken

to present some of the author's views concerning the management of prisons, woman's rights, woman's disloyalty to her sex, the frivolities of fashion; the book offends constantly in this,— the same story of"going to the opera house and seeing the curtain rise upon the interior of a church or lecture room from the rostrum of which someone delivers a ~~sermon or a~~ lecture."

The story in itself is simple and not particularly original, the characters are in two cases drawn with tolerable accuracy and there are here and there little touches which are very good either for the expression of wit or pathos. The most uninteresting part of the book is by all means the conversations.

The paragraphing is usually a little too frequent.

Since most of the subject matter is put in the form of conversation there cannot be much fault in the diction, except in the occasional use of expressions a little strained and unnatural: sometimes poetical words as "'ere", "fraught" and too frequent use of the inverted order. But there are also numerous happily chosen words, especially adjectives, and often a peculiar fitness of expression which is pleasing.

Miss Giles' poetry is for the most part light, lyric verse, usually in meter suited to its expression. She makes very frequent use of the rondeau and villanelle; of her more

serious verses "Revision", "Lo! I've seen an Eagle's Nest", "Wind Flowers" and "Flowers of the Spirit" are the best.

Of the light, lyric style of most of her poems "Pink Roses"is a fair illustration:

"Oh sweet little girl in the pink gingham dress,
Who brought me a cluster of roses to-day,
Just hear what the gift and the giver express,-
My thoughts they've entangled--oh, which went away?
Yourself or a bud? I was dreaming I guess.

For flowers and donor both seem to be here!
Oh, is it not strange, little girl clad in pink,
That roses can talk to me? One nodded "Dear."
They're all making love to me--what do you think?
Some murmur "I love you," and some say "Good cheer."

"I think of you fondly;" "I like you indeed,"
Says one with pale petals, so like your soft cheek.
I open a book, but they'll not let me read.
They're fragrance pursues me--in your voice they speak
"I love you, I love you; my message pray heed."

And one rivals you, dear, so fresh and so fair,
Pink-robed little rose-bud, with shy beaming glance.
It says what your eyes said, as standing just there
You lifted and drooped them in mute eloquence,-
Dropped also the roses in charming despair.

I know now, 'twas not you, my dear little maid,
Rose-flushing and toying with those amber beads
As you stood looking down. Your spirit has stayed!
Your love and your cheer, that my life sadly needs,
Will linger long after the pink roses fade."

Miss Giles' especial forte is unquestionably newspaper work. During winters spent in the south she has written a series of letters, or kept up a desultory correspondence with some of the leading papers of Chicago and Milwaukee, as well as the Madison papers.

These have been very delightful, written in a chatty style which is suggestive of a personal letter, and in them her experiences and impressions are wittily told.

Marion Manville.

Marion Manville's poems are not easily reconciled as com-

ing from one author, so great is the diversity in thought and style.

There are a few which deserve high praise: "Over the Divide" as a representative of the unpoetical class of verse to which it belongs, being the recital in dialect of a story much like Bret Hart's stories, were they in verse, and not unlike some of Will Carleton's; "Colliery Jim," a type of the same class; "My Children" a tender, pathetic little history in seven stanzas, the seventh of which might well be omitted, thus adding to the artistic effect and giving it climax; "An Immortelle" is one of a class of poems to which she should have added more, since she writes them well, with the half suggestion, the double meaning, the unexplained metaphors which are so pleasing. "An Immortelle is one of her best. "Silence" may be mentioned and the "Last Star;" this is especially good the half metaphor being sustained throughout.

With the rest the principal fault seems to be lack of something about which to write; the merest suggestion seems to be grasped and embodied in verse, which is then very frequently not only unpoetical but less than commonplace, and lacking even the virtue of originality: "The Postman", "Hints to the Weather-man," "The Funny Man from Funny-Land," are the worst of these.

How one person could have allowed to be published in one volume "The Lost Star" and "Hints to the Weather-man" is incomprehensible.

The other poems have nothing especially to recommend them, as a whole, and not always anything to condemn.

She must be given credit for a frequent felicity of expression, a choice of musical, unusually combined and expressive words, which is very effective.

Helen Manville has published a volume of poems called "Heart Echoes."

Charles Noble Gregory.

There is no published collection of the poems of Mr. Gregory, but despite this fact he is well known as the author of many which deserve even a wider circulation than that given them by their publication in the best magazines. Some of his most charming verses are "In an Old Garden," "Tempus Actumnale" "Westminster Abbey," and "The Blue Gentain." These appeared in Littels Living Age, the Youth's Companion; and in the Overland Monthly appeared "St. Anders" his longest published poem. "Clover" in the New York Independent is especially admired. Scribner's Magazine, Harper's Weekly and Bazaar and the Current have all published poems by Mr. Gregory. Accounts of his work have appeared in the New York Herald, Journal and New Orleans Picayune.

His pamphlets and published lectures are of great interest and in constant demand; the three best known are: ""The Pleasures and Duties resulting from Higher Education," delivered before the Alumni Association; "Political Corruption and English and American Laws for its Prevention," before the World's Auxiliary Congress on Government; and "The Corrupt Use of Money in Politics and Laws for its Prevention" which is most popular of all and has been called for extensively in United States, in Europe and Japan.

But it is by his poems that Mr. Gregory will be best

known; they are exquisite little bits, some of them just fragments, and are graceful in form, and most pleasing in imagery.

"Vacation Thoughts" by Myron Baker is a collection of verses published in youth, and while giving evidence of possible future effort, shows a certain crudity and immaturity which is striking. It is as if a personality were so touched by the countless appeals of life which is just gaining significance, that expression of it is the first impulse; so that there is little originality, since the impressions are much the same as those so often received. There is in some cases conscious imitation, as in "Hadley Wood" which is written in the style of "Locksley Hall," and all through the verses one is constantly put in mind of passages in Tennyson, Milton, Shakespeare, Horace, by the rephrasing of some expression which occurs in their works. For example:

"While like the dark Etrurian shade
That high-arched Vallombrasa made,"

from Milton's "Thick as autumnal leaves,
That strew the brooks in Vallombrosa, where
Th' Etrurian shades high over-arched embower."

He is conscious of the immaturity of the verses as is stated in the preface; and there is really much in them which is strong, and very often graceful expression of thought.

Julia & Medåra Clark.

Julia & Medåra Clark have published a little volume of poems called "Driftwood." Most of the verses deal of love, and are written in a style which impresses one vaguely as "old-fashioned;" the diction is simple and unaffected, except in cases where there is a visible choice of words for the sake of the rhyme, and such instances occur frequently.

If there be a choice between the two it is probably in favor of Medåra whose poems strike now and then a note, a depth of feeling, or an expression of tenderness which does not characterize her sister's.

Very few abstract subjects are found, the poems being usually reveries or apostrophes in which the lyric element is strong,

Carlotta Perry.

Many of Carlotta Perry's poems are very good, yet there is seldom one strikingly original. Her greatest fault lies in the use of deceptive little phrases which sound well perhaps on account of the alliteration and yet which mean nothing when they are examined:

"I sit beside my happy hearth, and yet in paths of dole

and dearth," and "Two boats rocked on the river, In the shadow of leaf and tree."

Some of them such as "Sorcery", "What do I wish for You?" "Two Songs" are good, and she is usually successful with the sonnet.

Her work is principally verse, and she has published quite extensively in inland papers and magazines.

Eben Rexford.

Eben Rexford's work is almost wholly verse, except such articles as those in the "Ladies' Home Journal" upon flower culture. Some of his poetry is very good. "Lover and Brother" one of his longest poems, is ~~very fine~~ good, characterized by the dreaminess, the half-wistfulness, a vein of which runs through most of his work. There is an unconscious lyric element which is delightful, and his style is simple and his "manner" in his poetry unassuming and winning. A stanza from "March Dreams" has a suggestion of this dreaminess:

"I dream that I hear the robin singing
His old, sweet song in the apple-tree,
And the warm south-wind blows about me, bringing
A thought of the April that is to be."

There are many minor authors from whom perhaps only one book has come or who are known only by occasional poems. Julia Lascher's only well-known book is "Arbutus & Dandelions;" It is a home story, really well-told, and certainly bright and interesting.

There is no plot and the story is rather a history of the home life of the six principal characters. The charm of the book is in the easy boy and girl conversations, and even there there is ~~more~~ a greater frequency of colloquial expressions than is quite consistent with the children of a cultured home such as is created.

There can be little fault found with the diction, since most of the book is conversational, but the punctuation is very bad, commas being used constantly where only periods are permissable; and quotation marks are often ignored, and capitals wrongly placed.

It is not a book with a conscious moral purpose though it suggests a lesson.

John Goodby Gregory has published a little volume of verse: "A Beauty of Thebes and other Verses," most of them light, playful little stanzas, one or two of them graceful; none of them poems.

Ex-Governor George Peck has published a series of books relating of "Peck's Bad Boy," which is far more widely known than it deserves, being without literary merit.

Florence Campbell Reid's "Jack's Afire" is a story of war-time, written for the story's sake only and not artistic in any sense. Some of her later work is better.

Ellen E. Phillips (Ada J. Moore) has published a little volume: "Under the Pines." She has contributed a great deal to newspapers, most of this work being verse.

Kent Kennan in his sketches of Siberia and Siberian life in "Harper's Monthly" shows his power ~~both of~~ narration, and description, which is unusually strong and vivid.

Hamlin Garland.

Among Wisconsin writers of past and present noone attains the degree of excellence which Hamlin Garland has reached; no one has made literature so truly an art as he, or produced work so consciously perfected.

He is a member of the realistic school; one may almost say a devotee of Realism; and this quality, which may cause him to be under-estimated in the popular judgment, is his

greatest charm.and fills his work with delicately appreciative and sympathetic touches which are marvellous in their appeals to and for humanity.

His books are not strong; there is very little of the dramatic in them, very little decided action. The interest does not center about the recital and one does not remember longest the mere events of the story. Their value then consists not so much in the story as a whole as in the little touches which appear constantly: a bit of description, a homely comparison, an effective metaphor, the mention, apparently by chance, of some common-place event, the unusual use of a word, as, "The room was cheerful in a determined sort of way." "The little one at her side clung to her skirts and avoided the eye like a young partridge."

"Ol' Pap's Flaxen" is one of his most charming books, not because of the story, but because of its realism; in this the master-stroke in his description of Bert going across the Dakota prairie alone to bury a woman who has been frozen to death and whose child his companion, Anson, has rescued and carried home who becomes "Ol' Pap's Flaxen." The three pages of description are perhaps the finest in the book.

"It required strong effort on the part of the young man to open the door of the cottage and he stood for some time

with his hand on the latch, looking about. There was perfect silence without and within, no trace of feet or hands anywhere. All was as peaceful and unbroken as a sepulchre.

Finally, as if angry with himself, Gearheart shook himself and pushed open the door letting the morning sun stream in. It lighted the bare little room and fell on the frozen face and rigid, half-open eyes of the dead woman with a strong white glare. The thin face, and worn, large-jointed hands lying outside the quilt told of the hardships which had been the lot of the sleeper. Her clothing was clean and finer than one would expect to see.

Gearheart stood looking at her for a long time, the door still open, for he felt re-enforced in some way by the sun. If anyone had come suddenly and closed the door on him and the white figure there, he would have cried out and struggled like a madman to escape, such was his unreasoning fear of the dead.

At length, with a long breath, he backed out and closed the door. Going to the barn, he found a cow standing at an empty manger and some hens and pigs frozen in the hay. Looking about for some boards to make a coffin, he came upon a long box in which a reaper had been packed and this he proceeded to nail together firmly and to line with pieces of an old stove-pipe at such places as he thought the mice would try to

enter.

When it was all prepared, he carried the box to the house and managed to lay it down beside the bed; but he could not bring himself to touch the body. He went out to see if someone were not coming. The sound of a human voice would have relieved him at once, and he could have gone on without hesitation. But there was noone in sight and no one was likely to be; so he returned, and summoning all his resolution, took one of the quilts from the bed and placed it in the bottom of the box. Then he paused, the cold moisture breaking out on his face.

Like all young persons born far from war, and having no knowledge of death even in its quiet forms, he had the most powerful organic repugnance towards a corpse. He kept his eye on it as though it were a sleeping horror, likely at a sudden sound to rise and walk. More than this, there had always been something peculiarly sacred in the form of a woman, and in his calmer moments the dead mother appealed to him with irresistable power.

At last, with a sort of moan through his set teeth, he approached the bed and threw the sheet over the figure, holding it as in a sling; then, by a mighty effort, he swung it

stiffly off the bed into the box.

He trembled so that he could hardly spread the remaining quilts over the dead face. The box was wide enough to receive the stiff, curved right arm, and he had nothing to do but to nail the cover on, which he did in feverish haste. Then he rose, grasped his tools, rushed outside, slammed the door, and set off in great speed across the snow, pushed on by an indescribable horror."

There is not enough dramatic action in the book and in this it lacks strength; there is very little to the story, and its ending is commonplace and unsatisfactory; the power of the book lies in its realism.

His shorter stories as, "Prairie Folks" are not so good; there is not enough variety in the stories to make the book entertaining and the stories themselves are not new or especially interesting. The realism is often carried too far to be pleasing. Art is art when it represents truly the thing which it chooses to reproduce, yetthe Greek art produced only the beautiful; and to insist upon accurate presentation as the sole basis of value in art with no modifying aesthetic judgment is to offend constantly. In "Sim Burns' Wife" this is illustrated: the unlovely details, the painfully, almost disgustingly accurate, descriptions offend and partly destroy the

impressions made by the more delicate bits of realism which are so effective. His description of Sim Burns' wife is this: "Lucretia Burns had never been handsome even in her days of early girl-hood, and now she was middle-aged, distorted with work, and looking faded and worn as one of the boulders that lay beside the pasture fence near where she sat milking a large white cow.

She had no shawl and hat and no shoes for it was still muddy in the little yard where the cattle stood patiently fighting the flies and mosquitoes swarming into their skins, already wet with blood.

She rose from the cow's side at last, and taking her pails of foaming milk, staggered toward the gate. The two pails hung from her lean arms, her bare feet slipped on the filthy ground, her greasy and faded calico dress showed her tired, swollen ankels, and the mosquitoes swarmed mercilessly on her neck and bedded themselves in her colorless hair."

Realism such as this cannot be a characteristic of art; and it is inexpressibly painful. Two carefully worded sentences would give the picture in charcoal; leaving the etching for the production of more pleasing details.

"Jason Edwards" is not so good since it approaches the

novel with a purpose, which, if it be a conscious purpose, is so inartistic.

Hamlin Garland is distinctly American and he is the only Wisconsin author of whom this may be said. He is not a representative author of all phases of Americanism by any means, nor is this to be desired of the most versatile writer; he does not treat of the "upper" classes and not often the middle classes in the accepted significance of the term. It is of the poor, the property poor, that he treats; those who struggling for a living are obliged "to omit to live" and who are pathetically conscious of it and struggle against the "existing state of things" blindly, pitifully. He tells especially of farm-life, the dreary, un-lovely farm-life of Iowa and Dakota with its "ceaseless, incredible toil," and its meagre financial profits and its consequent starvation of mind and soul. The lives of the women of such "homes" are depicted with great accuracy.

A bit from Sim Burn's Wife is pathetic in the extreme and the two quotations made from the story are significant of the manner in which he makes his realism something extremely painful and something beautiful.

"It was a pitifully worn, almost tragic face, long, thin,

sallow, hollow-eyed. The mouth had long since lost its power to shape itself into a kiss, and had a droop at the corners which seemed to announce a breaking down at any moment into a despairing wail. The collarless neck and sharp shoulders showed painfully.

She felt vaguely that the night was beautiful. The setting sun, the noise of frogs, the nocturnal insects beginning to pipe, all in some way called her girl-hood back to her, though there was little in her girlhood to give her pleasure. Her large, grey eyes grew round, deep and wistful as she saw the illimitable craggy clouds grow crimson, roll slowly up, and fire at the top. A childish scream recalled her."

This is an especially delicate description and the last paragraph could not be more effictively rounded or the pathos of the woman's life more skillfully portrayed than by almost the climax in the last sentence.

Yet in this treatment, if he does not show himself pessimestic, he is at least at fault; for there is another side to such life, else it could not be lived in sanity, and this he reveals but rarely.

There are a number of errors or inconsistancies in his expressions which can hardly be classified: a frequent omis-

sion of the subject of the verb when there are two or more predicates with modifying clauses; and others, as: "he saw R. beginning to get ready to go out;" "speaking with a peculiar, vibrating, crisp and expressive intonation while the audience was cheering wildly;" and a frequent repetition of the same word in consecutive phrases: "the still pools were starred with lilies and in their clear, still nooks reflected the sky and wood." These are a fair illustrations of the little roughnesses which occur, faults which one recognizes perhaps without being able to locate them until he has read the sentence a second time.

Is there a school of Wisconsin authors? It has been popularly and fondly supposed that there is such a school of Wisconsin authors, and this idea has been entertained chiefly because of the indefiniteness of the term "school."

In order that writers shall belong to the same school it is not necessary that they treat of the same subjects, or even of different subjects in the same manner; and besides these perceptible differences there must be the indefinible one in the authors' personalities and yet not withstanding they may belong to the same school.

The similarity comes rather from a like point of view, a like balance and grasp of the subject matter; and mechanically there must be a general similarity in vocabulary so far as choice lies between Anglo-Saxon and Latin words, between obsolete and those newly coined; they must have the same rhetorical ideas consciously attempted, the same standards so far as realism and romanticism are concerned, the same lack of conscious moral purpose or the same striving for its proper expression. It is these things which have marked the schools in literature which have existed, and not the subject matter.

The Transcendental School is one of the best examples:- William Ellery Channing, Theodore Parker, Margaret Fuller and Emerson; and later Walt Whitman. Even a slight familiarity with these authors shows at once their similarity; their claim as members of one school comes from their point of view, for each one exhibits strikingly his individuality.

The looseness with which the word "school" is used is illustrated by the fact that the term is usually applied to the Lake Poets, simply because of their place of residence, for their poetry is emphatically not of one school.

The thirteen Wisconsin authors have then no claim whatever as members of a school. The verse for instance is a

great deal alike, so much so that if after reading any number of poems by several of them, one were given a poem whose author was among the several, he would find it difficult to decide to whom it belonged; but this, so far from making them members of one school, discredits the idea of any of the several belonging to schools themselves.

What similarity there is in their writings comes, not from the influence of one school, but from the fact that they happen to possess on an average the same amount of talent, and there is nothing very original or striking in most cases to distinguish the works of one from another; and from the fact that they have all drawn from the same sources, imitated the same models and have not won their material so much from men as from books which they have not colored sufficiently with their own personalities. So there are the same stock phrases, the orthodox expressions, the same adjectives connected which have appeared together so many times; therefore they have been called a school! Lack of individuality does not constitute a school and there is this lack among Wisconsin authors; a lack of the lyric quality, so to speak, the revelation of their personalities in their work.

There is no school of Wisconsin authors, and a great many

of the authors do not belong to any distinct school.

Is there Americanism in Wisconsin authors?

What is Americanism? It is not necessarily mere patriotism, it is not necessarily treatment entirely of American affairs and American people though it usually includes both; it is not found in literature in which the "Yankee shrewdness" or the American noveaux riches vulgarity or the American woman's independence is treated and made the prominent characteristic of the story; above all Americanism does not mean dialect writing, using the colloquialisms and provincialisms of different sections of the United States as New England, the Rocky Mountains, the blue grass region of Kentucky; or as in the "Hoosier School-Master," in Bret Hart's stories, in most of Will Carleton's poems. These may be truly American, but it is not because of the dialect; and yet that,—a secondary matter in itself, a single feature of the life introduced for realism,—has come to stand as the principal characteristic of these author's works; Americanism is before all else a treatment of subject matter from a purely American point of view.

But it is not so easy to define as it is to recognize; when it appears it is unmistakable and its charm is unfailing. It is not possible that one pen should have the versatility to

portray equally well all the sides which American life presents, and it is not necessary that it should; only where one author has succeeded especially well in portraying some one side and has produced work purely American, the characteristics of that especial side and its treatment are not what make it American; so that it is not the dialect in the "Hoosier School-Master" or in "The Luck of Roarin' Camp" that makes ~~it~~ them so truly American; but ~~it~~ that is rather only a quality of the author's Americanism.

Always excepting Hamlin Garland, there is not a ~~view~~ sign of Americanism in the Wisconsin authors. One could not determine definitely of what nationality they are by reading their books; while Hawthorne, ~~Irving~~, Whittier, Walt Whitman have in them notes of American song which are unmistakable, and will last as long as the language does.

There is no reason why Wisconsin should not have a literature as truly American as that which has come from the other states; nature and civilization present themselves here in all their "infinite variety" and the personality which can make them its own and having absorbed can transmit gloriously its material stamped with Americanism and its own individuality will make Wisconsin classic ground; as Irving has almost hal-

lowed the Hudson highlands, as Longfellow has immortalized "the forest primeval."

Approved,

David B. Frankenbergen

Professor of Rhetoric & Oratory