

# Talk About Books

**LEAVES FROM THE CITY BEAUTIFUL.** By Amelia M. Starkweather and Jacob F. Starkweather. Cloth, 12mo. \$1.25 net. Boston: Sherman, French & Co.

"Leaves from the City Beautiful," is the appropriate title of a new volume of verse by Amelia M. Starkweather and her husband, Jacob F. Starkweather. The work is that of a student and lover of humankind. Its appeal is to the vivacious boy and girl as well as to the reflective student of middle age; and humor touched with seriousness accomplishes effects here and there that neither of these alone could attain. It is altogether the kind of verse which is ever welcome—the resultant of an earnest soul's reaction upon wholesome experience—and is sure to find a welcome in the hearts of its many readers.

**THE SPIRIT PROSPERO AND OTHER POEMS.** By Frederick Brooks Lindsey. Boston: Sherman, French & Co. \$1 net; by mail \$1.08. The high thoughts in which this pleasing volume abounds are somewhat marred by ruggedness of meter and diction. The title-piece, "The Spirit Prospero," contains profound and scholarly meditations on nature and life, for which no fitter measure could have been chosen than the splendid Spenserian stanza; but we should like to see this noble stanza less carelessly used, with no redundant syllables, bad rhymes, distorted accents, or faulty Alexandrines. The most polished and melodious poems in the collection are the sonnets. These are, almost without exception, correct in meter. Loftiness of purpose, high intellectuality, and keen appreciation of nature characterize the volume as a whole.

**SOLITUDE LETTERS.** By Mary Taylor Blauvelt. Boston: Sherman, French & Company. \$1.30.

Some ten years ago an interesting historical book appeared, "The Development of Cabinet Government in England." Last year a very different kind of volume came from the same pen. It was called "In Cambridge Backs," and was the result of some time spent near the great English university. Now we have a third book, "Solitude Letters," in which Miss Blauvelt continues the strain begun in the pages inspired by Cambridge. The "letters" are really familiar essays, on such topics as sincerity, success and failure, vacations, college girls and the home, and so on. The subjects are many and varied, but they are all handled with freshness and with insight. To philosophize through two hundred pages without making oneself insufferable is no small achievement, but it is accomplished in "Solitude Letters." Here is a sample of the author's thinking: "Is it not true that the greatest geniuses do not make us cry? In reading aloud I cry over almost anything, but that is purely physical, the voice gets choked up. But in reading to myself I find that neither Shakespeare nor Goethe make me

cry, and that I am much more likely to cry over minor writers than over Thackeray, Dickens or George Eliot."

**THE LIFE OF THE SPIDER.** By J. Henri Fabre. Translated by Alexander Teixeira de Mattos, with a preface by Maurice Maeterlinck. New York: Dodd, Mead and Co. \$1.50 net.

In the introduction to the charming stories of spider life, Maurice Maeterlinck pays tribute to J. Henri Fabre as a writer, a scholar and a poet and then introduces one after another of the subjects in the book in such a fascinating style that the reader at once becomes desirous of continuing the acquaintance.

The book in every way fulfils the promises in the introduction and the accuracy and detail with which the habits and life history of the many arachnids are depicted show the author to be a most earnest and careful student of his subjects.

To the lover of nature "The Life of the Spider" giving in detail the spinning of the web by the various Epeirae, the rearing of the family by the Lycosa, the villianous attacks upon its prey by the tarantula can not fail to be of exceeding great interest. The book differs from most of its kind by giving no illustrations.

**ETHICS.** By G. E. Moore. New York: Henry Holt & Co. 50c net. In the very readable analysis of various logical questions related to one of the doctrines of utilitarianism, Mr. G. E. Moore in "Ethics" has chosen to regard the subject from the point of view of pure reason. His view is the anatomical one, and he goes at his task in a style that is admirable for its simplicity and clearness. Starting with a statement of the particular form of utilitarianism which he is considering, he proceeds in the subsequent chapters to bring forward and analyze various objections that have been advanced against the doctrine under examination. Excellent résumés are frequent and help to clarify and intensify the views presented. The book, unlike the ethical essays of such men as Emerson or James, has little or no value in the determination of concrete questions of right and wrong, except in so far as it shows the uselessness of the syllogism as a light to the path of duty.

**WHAT PICTURES TO SEE IN EUROPE IN ONE SUMMER.** By Lorinda Munson Bryant. New York: John Lane Company. \$1.50 net. Tourists in Europe whose itinerary allows them but three days for the city called "Eternal," two, perchance, for the city that saw the first dawn of the Renaissance, will welcome this little guide designed to help those who hurry, not because they will but because they must. "Public opinion aided by time and thoughtful criticism," the writer says, has determined her choice of these one hundred pictures. Certainly no two people could perfectly agree on a list of this kind; hence no traveler should follow his guide too closely but should occasionally make a dash for himself.