



The School



Summer Reading



TIME: any summer's day. Place: the apartment of Mr. Vacationist.

Mr. V. off for a few weeks' rest, has just tightened the last strap on his last piece of luggage and now straightens up with a weary sigh of relief.

"Everything packed and a half hour ahead of time. There's a record for you!" Then a look of consternation—

" . . . I knew it! It was too good to be true. I've forgotten all about the books."

This was the way of it. Mr. V. liked a good book now and then,—a book with some semblance of thought behind it. He desired especially to keep in touch with modern publications but during the winter months he was hampered by the press of business. He had intended to store up a treasure for his period of leisure, but even as you and I had deferred this work until the last possible moment—then promptly forgot all about it. What will he do? For the life of him he can't recall a single book of the many that had attracted his attention, and he entertains visions of rainy days when he will be forced to seek solace in the pages of the "Daily Howl," or worse, in the saccharine contents of the "Apple-sauce Monthly."

At this juncture Mrs. V. enters. She listens to his tale of woe and then hurries from the room with a smirk of satisfaction. In another moment she returns, waving triumphantly a slip of paper.

"Here you are, John; here's your list of titles. Knowing how impractical you are I foresaw something of this kind, and so I made a memorandum of the books you mentioned. Let's go over them and you can pick out what you want and I shall send to the bookseller for them." More sighs of relief from Mr. V., and they settle down on the sofa for a hurried consultation.

"Let's first look for something serious. Now there's Papini's 'Life of Christ' which has been out for some time and has caused

such a stir in this prosaic world of ours. I know that you balk at lives of saints but I really think that Chesterton's 'St. Francis of Assisi' will appeal to you; it's so different. And look here—you remember how interested you were in Father Joyce's 'Principles of Natural Theology.' You said that you had been waiting for some one to come out with an understandable treatment of this section of Catholic philosophy. Again, you have never read 'The High Romance' by Michael Williams. I have urged you many times but you said you couldn't locate the book. There's no excuse now since a new edition has just come from the press.

"But I don't want you to spend all your time on such books. You must have something lighter, something more entertaining. Now let me see. . . . How about Hooker's translation of 'Cyrano de Bergerac?' We were carried away with Walter Hampden in this role and the book should be twice as interesting after seeing the play. Or you might try Alex Woollcott's latest, 'Enchanted Aisles,' or Frederick O'Brien's 'Atolls of the Sun.' The reviewers say that both these books are just too delicious for anything."

"Is there anything on the list in the line of poetry or essays?"

"Just a moment. . . . There's Frost's 'New Hampshire,' St. Vincent Millay's 'The Harp-Weaver,' and—oh yes—that new edition of 'Later Poems' and 'Plays in Prose and Verse' by Mr. Yeats. As for essays—well, Dr. Collins has just had another look at literature in 'Taking the Literary Pulse.' You will recall how highly the late Maurice Francis Egan praised his first diagnosis. You might also take a peek at Hilaire Belloc's 'The Conquest.' He has always been a favorite of yours. Or, why not try Nickerson's 'The Inquisition' and that new book of Miss Repplier, 'Under Dispute'?"

"Well it's getting late. You just send for any of those and I'll be satisfied."

"All right, if you'll trust my judgment. I'll include two or three of the best novels such as 'The Cathedral' by Hugh Walpole, Hudson's 'Nowhere Else in the World,' and 'False Gods' by Will Scarlet—that real Catholic novel of which we have heard so much."

Thus was Mr. V.'s problem happily solved. It is a safe guess that he did not wait for a rainy day to dip into his treasures. They were too enticing.