

had failed to keep faith, had become a courtesan and was then under arrest for murder. The revelation of this direct consequence of his crime not only causes him remorse but induces him to repent, with the repentance of Paul. Flagellations satisfied the conscience of the Middle Ages, but the modern monitor demands reparation to the individuals sinned against. Nehkludoff confesses his sin to the world, to the girl; to his intimate friends among the nobility, and more than all he constantly renews his resolve, in spite of the arguments of friends and relatives, to marry the woman whose feet he had set on the downward way. Maslova, the woman, is condemned to Siberia, though she is innocent. The penitent follows her and aids her in every possible way, identifying himself with her at all times. On the march to Siberia, at the halting places, the morale of the prisoners is shown to be of a high order. Tolstoy, like some other humanitarians, may believe that virtue is found more freely among the poor. At any rate the poor in "Resurrection" are generous, gentle and patient. The rich are cruel, unjust, rapacious and over-fed. The impression that remains after reading the book is one of an experience of great kindness, and also of great frankness. Russians, high and low, judging from the books of Tolstoy, Gogol, Turgenieff and Stepniak are distinguished by a frankness, an acknowledgement of the facts of life, that we ignore. The Russians are where we were in the time of Elizabeth. They are writing Elizabethan Russian now, only with more power and virility and more integrity than the Elizabethans themselves. The tendency of a highly differentiated existence like ours, is to obscure the really few and simple rules of life. "Resurrection" has been severely criticised, and by an artistic standard Anna Karenina is a greater book, but as an example of direct dealing and of the Russian manner it is very satisfactory. Anglo-Saxon men and women neither understand nor like the frankness that is Russian. We drape everything—and cultivate a false modesty thereby. So that when we are self-convicted of sin against our neighbor, we are too much ashamed to confess it.

"Resurrection" is the story of regenerated characters accomplished through the repentance and reparation of one man. The morality it teaches is so far beyond our standard that it is not surprising that the book has received very unsympathetic criticism in this country and England. The Russians are nearer the eternal verities than we are, and it shows in their literature, much as we hate to admit it.

Il Risorgimento

A society to Americanize Italians and protect them from the sharpers who on their first arrival in America attempt to get their money and appropriate their labor, is called Il Risorgimento. On historical grounds every Italian should feel as much at home on American soil as the Anglo-Saxon. Columbus was a Genoese; John Cabot, the discoverer of the continent of North America, was born in Venice; Verazzano, who sailed into New York harbor nearly a hundred years before the coming of Henry Hudson, was a Florentine. About a hundred thousand Italians per annum are now arriving in the port of New York.

"It has long been known that on account of a specially dependent temperament, on account of polyglot dialects, through the schemes of in-

triguing padrones, corrupt officials and interpreters, and because of a wide-spread prejudice against Italians, life in America for these immigrants is but a sorrowful experience." The prejudice is more tenacious than the slavery to the padrone. In a comparatively short time the Italian immigrant learns that he is being imposed upon and asserts his freedom. Prejudice, while more impalpable than the contract to the padrone, is more difficult to overcome.

"The glory of our age is its helpful spirit, its applied Christianity. In a pathological sense Christ did come to torment us, as the two men possessed of an evil spirit said. The ablest thinkers of today are "tormented" with a noble discontent, striving to lift some of the fallen and despised." The New York state bureau of labor statistics for 1898 contains photographs of the shanties in which the padrones herd the newly-arrived immigrants. The text which accompanies the photographs is a narrative by the paid agent of the bureau who in disguise worked with the gangs from the different shanties. Although the investigation has made the padrones more careful, the system is still in force. The immigrant arranges with the padrone before he embarks for this country, and goes from the barge office directly to his office.

All kinds of greedy boarding house keepers, bogus conductors and guides and pettifogging lawyers guide the immigrant into traps kept set the year through. In 1894 Gaetano Conte of Boston, doing city missionary work there, discovered the dreadful conditions surrounding Italian immigrants, and aroused public interest in their improvement. But the society finally disbanded for lack of funds. A new society, Il Risorgimento, was organized last November. Among the officers is Miss Sarah Wool Moore, an artist, a scholar, and a philanthropist. She was formerly a resident of Nebraska, and sends The Courier the preceding account of the society.

The constitution of the society states that the objects are

3. To explain to newly arrived and other immigrants that their own well-being in America and the good will of Americans will depend largely upon their learning our language and upon their adoption of our customs and principles; and that, to secure this good standing, they should promise:

1. Not to carry concealed weapons.
2. To learn the English language.
3. To sacredly guard the privileges of the franchise.
4. To respect the Sunday laws.
5. To assist compatriots in all rightful ways.

These objects of the society are being accomplished by sewing classes, mothers' classes, English classes and cooking classes, and by all other means by which sociable contact can civilize. Miss Moore adds that "the American branch ought to represent in its membership every Christian denomination, and the efforts and aims of Il Risorgimento (the Renaissance) proper ought to enlist the sympathy and support of every public-spirited citizen. Friends of this movement who wish to offer to it substantial aid are invited to become members meriting gratitude, or as the Italians express it more concisely, 'memberi benemeriti.' The honorarium for which privilege is placed at five dollars."

"So many gods, so many creeds,
So many ways that wind and wind
When all the help this sad world needs
Is just the art of being kind."

A prejudice against a nation is unjust, because the prejudice was form-

ed in consequence of the conduct of the vicious of that nation. A prejudice against a nation, therefore, is a prejudice against a few, but includes all. The good vastly outnumber the bad or vicious. Upon innocent Italians we visit the crimes committed by a few criminals. If the society does no more than call attention to the injustice and cruelty of the American prejudice against Italians, it will have justified its creation. After the assassination of King Humbert, the Italians of Chicago organized a procession in honor of Italy and to the memory of King Humbert. The Americans who watched this parade were surprised. They were surprised because the intelligent, manly, strong masons, carpenters, contractors, merchants and professional men did not harmonize with their idea of Italians. The fervent patriotism, the expressions of loyalty to their country and to America embarrassed the Americans who watched the parade, by demonstrating what erroneous opinions a great number of our people may hold. Dante, Petrarch, Michael Angelo and Raphael were Italians. The high water mark of such a civilization must descend very low before reaching the estimation in which we hold their nation. The average Italian is not so gifted as these great ones; but the average Italian is nearer to them than he is to the type we designate by "Dago."

Birds.

Robins, nut hatches, black-birds, jays, meadow-larks, song sparrows, thrushes, wood-peckers, and other birds innumerable make Nebraska just now a paradise of birds and spring. Nature has provided this state with enough birds to keep the insects of Nebraska in their place. Since the population has grown to mature proportions, man has given his occasional leisure and all his vacations to destroying the balance of power between the birds, trees and grains. There is not a tree in the state unless it has had professional attention from its planting that is not riddled by borers. Trees will live with the bark peeling off and the heart pierced by myriads of holes, and have the appearance of soundness. The first strong Nebraska wind will crack off the brittle limbs and perhaps the bole. Therefore, a Nebraska home-maker's work is never done. His trees have a short life, and must be replanted at least every decade. Prairie-chickens and quail are voraciously insectivorous, and upon them particularly because they are succulent, hunters have made a merciless war. They are in the way of being exterminated. Whether by hunters' lust or for woman's vanity the insect insurance in this vicinity is fast expiring and is without renewals. The recent legislature passed a more stringent game law and what is indeed an insistent public opinion will make a man ashamed to kill birds out of season and a woman ashamed to wear a dead bird on her hat. We do not live by bread alone, and the birds are the music of nature. Morning and evening they bring us back from a crass materialism. But the farmers can best be reached by the argument that the protectors of the grains are being exterminated by selfish hunters. Farmers are not blind to beauty, but I reckon, if we plowed, barrowed, sowed and cultivated fifty acres of wheat and grass-hoppers ate half of it, we too would regret the birds as protectors rather than as musicians and professional beauties. Long ago when the temperance agitators began to complain that other people

drank too much whiskey, they were informed that whiskey always had been served in private houses and always would be, that hospitality demanded it. It is a long way from then to now, where only a few serve drinks on ordinary occasions to miscellaneous guests. The force of public sentiment has accomplished the change. It is now very bad form to get drunk and men who do are welcome guests in no man's house, in no man's club, and aboard no man's yacht. It is not impossible that after fifty years of exposition of the bad economy of exterminating insectivorous birds it may become bad form to be known as a pot-hunter out of season. Women will give up, for fashion's sake, what they would not for humanity, and in this form the Audubon propaganda will reach the women. Fastidious sportsmen already refuse to join in the butchery of pigeon shooting and the hour approaches when the practice will be illegal even in scornful Nebraska.

"He Willed It So."

Mr. Robert McReynolds has written a book, "He Willed It So." It is not an autobiographical sketch, and he calls his hero Rodney Wilkes. The frontispiece is a picture of a young man with his thumbs looped into his pockets, and reminds me of Mr. McReynolds when he first appeared in Lincoln many years ago. Mr. McReynolds has an imagination that soars and swoops. It lights on a crag, on the ground, on another crag, and the human mind does not quite comprehend its means of locomotion. It is a duty an author owes his readers to make every step of the way plain. An amateur author who has not written many books and may not write another, has so much to say that his mind outruns composition. Walking is too slow, and frequently he adopts a means of locomotion not intelligible, because not practiced by his readers. Mr. McReynolds has a glowing imagination, but owing to what is perhaps a poor memory, these reminiscences are fragmentary. Periods of his life have made a strong impression upon him. These are graphically related, but the book lacks unity. Mr. McReynolds has a fervid love of nature and an interpretative ability only possessed by a genuine lover of nature.

I recognize early scenes of Nebraska life and early Nebraska pioneers. There is an occasional paragraph of spicy characterization, and more than an occasional good description of scenery and weather. If Mr. McReynolds' lot had been placed among literary people, if he had early imbibed traditions of Hawthorne, Thackeray, Holmes, Hardy, or even of Smollett, he might have been a popular story writer. Early education, atmosphere, the peculiar inspiration of literary folk have much to do with a novelist's success and with his product. We do not know how the food we eat becomes us, until deprived of that food. A starved environment deprives a truly creative genius of its proper expression. "He Willed It So" is an indication of what the author might have accomplished under more favorable circumstances. Yet the book is not without intrinsic merit, and it is of especial interest to Nebraska people who know the author and the plains, skies, winds and wide horizons which have influenced his development. Occasionally we read a book with the feeling that the author has expressed more than he meant to say: in this book there is the constant impression that the author feels and has experi-