As in olden days, Paul Wistach
in Dixieland: The Bobbs-Merrill company, $1.50.
This is the right kind of a travel book for the armchair traveler. The usual tourist sights are passed over lightly, the unusual elaborated upon. Starting in at Naples, Mr. Wistach took the route through Paola and Cruca to the coast, while most travelers would start north toward Rome. Wherever he goes some bit of information, either historical or classical, is associated with the scene, and this, added to his beautiful descriptions, makes the book doubly fascinating.

In Naples the scenes of Caruso’s early days are ferreted out, and the interesting story of the famous tenor who never performed his native city is told. The southern shore of Italy, which once was colonized by traders from Greece, still retains ruins of great Greco-Roman temples, and the warmer travelers over them. The Adriatic coast between Bar and Brindisi are found the curious conical houses, the trulli, which are perhaps the least known secret of Italy. They are the greatest tourist routes and consequently very few visitors ever see them.

In Bari Mr. Wistach witnessed the land and sea force of King Alphonso, a descendent of the last Spanish family, which once ruled the town. In the houses of the town are found some of the finest furniture in Italy. The cities of the Adriatic furnish material for several chapters. Ano, in the foothills of the Alps mountains, beloved by Robert Browning, and the home of the famous Eleanora Duse, Bussoro, at one time the home of Verdi, and a great many other places complete Mr. Wistach’s story of his Italian holiday.

C. F. Scott.

Sister Sister Mary, by Julia Peterkin. Published by the Bobbs-Merrill company, $0.50.

Julia Peterkin, whose novel “Black April” was accepted by the critics as being one of the best written about the southern negro, has again essayed a character study of the same kind. The central figure is Mary, a negro of the Blue Brook plantation. All of the characters, with the exception of one, and that a minor one, are black folk.

At the age of 15 Mary, a high-spirited girl, a leader of the younger set, was engaged to marry July, described by Budda Ben as ‘wicked dirty, a polka dancer, and a dancer.’ Both Budda Ben and Maun Hamb, Mary’s foster mother, wanted her to marry July’s brother June, who was a polite young man, but July went away. After the wedding they settled in one of the old, dilapidated houses of the quarter. For a while July was contented to sit alone in his shed, but when the first baby arrived it seemed that he had forsaken his waywardness and had settled down. But when Cinder, one of his old friends, came to a scene, July drifted back to his old ways, and one fine day he took Cinder on an excursion down the river and did not return.

Mary’s love for her first husband was heightened by the fact that she annexed by the aid of a captivating ring which she had secured from old Daddy Cuddie. After a few years June, too, deserted for points unknown, leaving Mary to take care of the ever-increasing number of children. The conjuring ring was brought into play frequently during those years, so that by the time July at last arrived home after an absence of 20 years, Mary remarked to him, “Sho I got children. I got plenty of children! Plenty! Dey all want you,” to which he replied, “It’s none o’ you business how many I got.”

“Scarlet Sister Mary” is every bit as good as “Black April.”


The Empress Eugenie, widow of Emperor Napoleon III of France, died. At that time it was supposed that she had written an autobiography which would clear up many disputed points about the second empire, relating especially to the reason for the famous imperialist moves of her husband. It transpired that the emperor had forbidden her to write her memoirs, but she had found another method of presenting her side of the story to the world.

As early as 1901 she had been in touch with a French diplomat, and had been telling him the inside story of her ill-fated reign. Mr. Paleologue had been recording the gist of his conversations with Empress, and had asked permission to publish his material after her death. These conversations took place at various times and places whenever it was convenient for the Empress. They were scattered over the years from 1901 to 1920.

This is not a connected story of the second empire, but it contains some excellent statements of fact and conjecture made by the “tragic empress.” It clears up a number of mysterious points concerning especially the Prussian war of 1870 and the Mexican expedition of 1854.

C. F.


The soundness of the scholarship shown in this volume on form and style in poetry by the late W. P. Ker is startling in contrast with the welter of claptrap which passes for scholarly work in this age of cacophony. This volume is the result of four years spent at University college, London, from 1911 to 1921, and part of his lectures on the same subject given elsewhere from 1887 on. Ker’s familiarity with his subject and the openness of intellectual power serve to make it particularly outstanding as a study in literature. It is a significant contribution to the field of criticism, and the notes which Ker has left behind have been edited by R. W. Chambers. A list of notes is appended.

Some of the topics touched on are: "All too bitter in Ker’s "Romanism," the work by which he is best known, are continued and developed here. Outstanding among them are the lectures on the history of the "heads in relation to the development of form, and those on Chaucer and the Scotch Chaucerians. Seventy-five pages of notes and illustrations from many literatures add more value to an extremely valuable text-book.